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THE NEWSPAPER FOR SITTINGBOURNE, ISLE OF SHEPPEY, FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT

Issue No 108

Available from Wednesday,  
October 7, 2009

## The Biggest and Best Pantomime Adventure!

Ade  
Edmondson  
as Captain Hook

Dave Lee  
as Tinkerbell

Ben Roddy  
as Smee

# PETER PAN

Original Book - J. M. Barrie, Adaptation - Paul Hendy  
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KENT ON SUNDAY

# Peter Pan at Marlowe Theatre Arena

**SNAP TO IT:**  
Ade Edmondson  
will be playing  
Captain Hook  
in his first-ever  
pantomime



## A 'Jack of all Ades'

AS a "Jack of all trades" (his own words), Ade Edmondson's career has been long and diverse, but Peter Pan is his first-ever pantomime role.

The 52-year-old is probably best-known for his roles in legendary TV sitcoms such as *The Young Ones*, *Bottom* and *Filthy Rich* and *Catflap*, but he is also a stand-up comedian, author (of a novel and scripts), West End performer, music video director, chart-topper and soap opera star.

Ade's most recent TV appearance was earlier this year when he was runner-up in the ITV cookery reality show *Hell's Kitchen*. He has since spent most of his time on the road with his folk/punk band The Bad Shepherds and is touring until just a couple of weeks before panto rehearsals begin in mid-November.

But how did Ade ever get to be in panto in the first place?

He said: "My agent sent me an email saying he was sure the answer would be 'no'. I've taken my kids to see many a rubbish panto and so many of them just get a soap star and make them do pop songs with new lyrics about Cinderella. But I asked to see a script of a previous one and was impressed with what Emily and Paul were trying to do. I went to meet them – she got so excited when she told

me they'd got a new crocodile – and this one could eat you. I thought, I want to do that, I wanted to be eaten by the new crocodile.

"In the *Young Ones* and *Bottom* there was always this childish excitement about theatrical stuff. In the *Bottom* tours we used to have loads of big props – like being chased around the stage by a wild boar on some tracks.

"I love the Victorian-like reliance on mechanics. I love the idea of a revolving Neverland Island. It all appeals to me. It's just something I wanted to do."

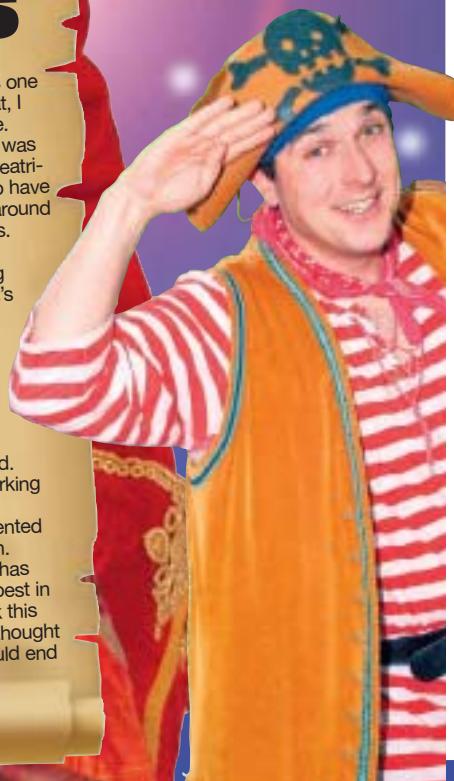
Ade was also won over by the promise that he could write much of his character's script. And there was an added attraction. "Peter Pan is a cracking story and Captain Hook is a fantastic character. I'm looking forward to stamping myself on the role," he said.

Paul is excited at the prospect of working with Ade.

He said: "He is a comedy icon, a talented performer and an extremely funny man.

"Over the years, the Marlowe panto has built a reputation as being one of the best in the country; with Ade on board, I think this will be our funniest ever. Who'd have thought that Vyvyan from *The Young Ones* would end up doing the Ghost Gag routine?"

**AYE AYE CAPN':**  
Ben Roddy is Smee in  
this year's production  
of Peter Pan



**SHOW MUST GO ON: Marlowe's Mark Everett**

**T**HE Marlowe, like most regional theatres, regards the annual pantomime as the most important show in the year. It's not hard to see why.

The panto has for some time been the highest-attended show of all those the Marlowe puts on each year.

For example, more than 81,000 tickets were sold for *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* last winter. This was 30 per cent of the 270,000 tickets sold throughout that year, and a record-breaker.

Similarly, the panto makes a huge contribution to the theatre's income and overall financial health. *Snow White* sold more than £1.1million of tickets. The income the Marlowe earned from it was some 43 per cent of the total from all the other shows.

And all this over just eight weeks out of the 52!

For me, however, it's not just about money and 'bums on seats', vital though those factors are for any theatre. I believe the annual panto is important for other reasons.

Firstly, it is a genuinely accessible form of entertainment that all ages and sorts of people can enjoy. Secondly, panto offers a great opportunity for young people to experience the magic of live theatre for the first time.

Panto gives them everything: drama, comedy, music, dance, stage tricks and magic.

Therefore it was important to keep the Marlowe pantomime going over the two-year period when there isn't a Marlowe Theatre. The only question left was where to do it?

### Fabulous

The idea of the Marlowe Theatre Arena came from visiting the pantomime put on by the Bury St Edmunds Theatre Royal when it was closed for refurbishment.

They used a large tent in the grounds of a local country house and kept their audiences coming over the two years of the theatre's closure. I thought we could do the same in Canterbury and, fortunately, the closure of the Marlowe in early 2009, coincided with the council deciding to move the coach park from Kingsmead, thus freeing up a central site with good access and a hard standing for the temporary venue.

Having secured the site, the rest is business as normal. Our good friends Paul Hendy and Emily Wood at Evolution Productions will produce what I am sure will be a fabulous production of *Peter Pan*.

This will take place in a modern arena structure that will be heated, have comfortable seating, toilets (more than the old Marlowe) and good facilities for drinks and sweets. The rest is just a matter of selling the tickets.

So, although there is no Marlowe Theatre, panto will nevertheless remain live and well in Canterbury.

*By Marlowe Theatre Director Mark Everett*



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# IT'S WOOLIES ... BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

### WHAT'S ON & WATCH

[yourkenttv.co.uk](http://yourkenttv.co.uk)



**HARVEST:** See the journey of hops from a farm to pint of Shepherd Neame brew. Search 'beer'

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### YOU'LL LIKE THIS...

Magician Paul Daniels will be performing his one man show at the tiny Boughton Village Hall on Friday. His wife Debbie McGee will also be there.

Daniels told Yourswale in August, when we ran a story on his planned gig in Boughton, that he particularly enjoys the intimacy of smaller venues. The village hall has a capacity of just 300.

The veteran performer will take questions from the audience and perform some of his magic routines.

Tickets for An Audience with Paul Daniels are £12.50 from [www.starsaroundtown.co.uk](http://www.starsaroundtown.co.uk). The show starts at 7.30pm.



### EXCLUSIVE

■ BY NICK AMES

THE iconic Woolworths stores are set for a high street comeback – with Faversham in the running for the first outlet.

Less than ten months after the brand closed all its stores nationwide, a new chain dubbed "Son of Woolworths" is set to fill the void.

Alworths will sell everything from picture frames, toys and stationery, to pick 'n' mix, with its first stores opening next month.

The grand opening on November 5 will be 100 years to the day since Frank Winfield Woolworth unveiled his "five-and-dime" concept in Britain, with his first shop in Liverpool, after its huge success in the USA.

Competing with Faversham for the honour of having the first store back in action are Didcot in Oxfordshire and Wokingham in Berkshire, according to business sources.

The old Woolworth's store in Faversham is currently the site of BK Homewares, who have established themselves in the town and have a 15-year lease on the building.

It is unclear whether the store would be sited in that building or whether entrepreneurs would look for other premises, but staff at BK said they had not been approached.

The new chain will be headed by Andy Latham, the former head of stores and concessions at Woolworths.

It is believed he has drawn on family connections in the Middle East to finance the plan.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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# Residents back car wash site facing closure

## EXCLUSIVE

■ BY NICK AMES

A POPULAR car wash established by a family fleeing the war that engulfed the former Yugoslavia is threatened with closure.

The car wash was founded by Kosovan Valon Parallangaj and currently provides work for five people, all from the former Eastern Europe.

He admits he was unaware of UK planning laws when he leased the site, which used to be a garden centre but was derelict.

However, he applied for retrospective planning permission from Swale council, which was not forthcoming.

A petition with 150 signatures has been raised by locals who want to see the business survive.

Mr Parallangaj said: "The business is doing well and provides for five families who would otherwise be forced to rely on benefits.

"It has built up by word of mouth and we have a very good reputation locally."

Mr Parallangaj employs several family members as well as another worker from Poland at the business, which is on the Macknades Crossroads, a few hundred yards along the A2 outside Faversham in the Canterbury direction.

Faversham resident Martin Bellis helped to organise the petition and has taken up the case.

He said: "At times of economic hardship, councils should be looking to ensure that people are kept in work – not thrown on to the dole.

"This is a thriving business and it is threatened with closure, which will benefit no-one.

"I have heard councillors said it



**PETITION:** Valon Parallangaj, who set up the car wash, has the support of 150 residents

was an area which should have no development – well on the same side of the road and very close is a massive lorry parking site used by Kent County Council vehicles.

"It was a garage in the past and then a garden centre – if the car wash is closed we will have another derelict site which will be a target for vandals."

A statement from Swale Council said: "The proposal for change of use to a hand car washing facility is not suitable or acceptable in this countryside location.

"The site is outside the defined built-up area of Faversham and employment uses in this location should be appropriate for the rural location."

A spokesman added that the authority has a procedure in place to appeal against planning decisions.

## The wonder of Alworths makes debut in town

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Business insiders say while the Alworths name is new, the products it stocks will be familiar.

"We are talking about this being a Woolworths by another name," said an insider.

The original Woolworths brand name and logo were sold for £12 million several months ago to the Shop Direct Group, owned by the Barclay Brothers.

A spokesman for Shop Direct, the online retailer, said any developments that appeared to "come close" to the territory occupied by its brand Woolworths.co.uk would be "closely looked at" but added that action would not be taken "for the sake of it".

Although more than 60 per cent of the 807 former Woolworth stores are already re-occupied – predominantly by budget chains such as Iceland and Poundland – there are likely to be up to 50 more Alworths store openings in the South East in the coming year.

A large number of Alworths staff are likely to be drawn from the ranks of the 30,000 Woolworths employees made redundant when the chain went into administration at the end of last year.

Other names suggested for the new stores by former staff included Worthit, The People's Store and Britworths.

Laurence Young, of the Faversham Enterprise Agency, said: "This is really fascinating news and once again shows the high regard in which Faversham is held by the national retail industry."

## Round Britain sailor recognised by award

DISABLED yachtswoman Hilary Lister has been named Vitalise Woman of Achievement 2009.

Hilary, 37, from Selling, gained the award in recognition of her work pioneering disabled sailing.

This year she became the first disabled woman to sail solo around Great Britain.

She said: "I'm overwhelmed to receive this award. There are so many talented women here today that to be singled out is really humbling."

"This award is special to me because it's from Vitalise. They are all about empowering disabled people."

"I've spent my career saying we need to take the 'dis' out of disability".



For information and advice on travelling in Kent and for all our traffic regulation orders, please see the Kent on Saturday or the Kent on Sunday or visit our website at [www.kent.gov.uk/highways](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highways)



# Corrie star Michelle signs up for bootcamp

SOAP star Michelle Keegan has been getting mucky with a former Marine on a fitness drive.

Exercise fan Michelle, 21, who plays glamorous Tina McIntyre in Coronation Street, had a weekend of army-style fitness training with girl pals.

Running, sit-ups and boxing were among the work-outs undertaken by the group at the GI Jane Bootcamp in Sittingbourne.

Organiser Sharon Smith said: "Michelle really got stuck in and was covered in mud after one session, but that was part of the fun."

"And having a hunk of a Marine in charge meant the girls gave it their best effort."

The camps are organised at various locations across the county and are named after the movie GI Jane - starring Demi Moore - which tells a fictional story of the first woman to undergo training in the elite US Navy SEALs.

They are held on a one-week basis and promise a lifestyle changing basis - and the chance for women to drop one dress size as well as improve their overall fitness levels, look at their diet and examine how best to keep in trim.

Sharon got the idea for her rejuven-

■ BY NICK AMES

nating lifestyle training regime after going on a similar course in Hereford last year.

She said: "I wanted this to be a different experience for women."

The action-packed training schedule provides boxing, core training, war games, assault courses, running, power walking, skipping, riding, volleyball, netball and water activities.

"Put in the effort and you will see a significant loss in weight and inches," Sharon said. "It's not a prison for ladies and no-one will force you to do anything you are uncomfortable doing. But you'll be amazed at what you actually can achieve."

Last month Michelle was voted sexiest female at the Inside Soap Awards, beating stars from Emmerdale and EastEnders to win the title.

She said she was surprised as her character was usually "covered up" but also said how happy she was on a day-to-day basis.

The actress said: "You should see me when I'm not working. I'm always dressed down in a pair of jeans and Ugg boots.

"I'm really happy with the way my life is going. I still pinch myself everyday. I feel so lucky to be doing a job I love."



GI MICHELLE: The actress really got stuck in at the Sittingbourne exercise camp

## Candidate's inquiry into sludge smell continues

TORY hopeful Gordon Henderson has been carrying on his investigations into the smell which blighted Swale this summer.

The Conservative parliamentary candidate for Sittingbourne and Shepway has spoken to the Environment Agency about the noxious smells that spoiled the summer for many people in the Sittingbourne and Shepway area.

Among the issues discussed at the meeting were the procedures for registering exemptions for the storage and use of paper and sewage sludge and how the use of sludge is monitored and by whom.

Mr Henderson also learned something about the way in which sewage sludge is processed and how its use is governed.

Mr Henderson said: "It was a useful meeting, and I am much more aware of the processes involved in the use of paper and sewage sludge for agricultural purposes.

"I am satisfied that the Environment Agency and Swale council did as much as possible within the limits of the regulations with which they are governed."

## Winston at Elmley to shoot scenes for anti-knife crime film

ACTOR Ray Winstone has been shooting scenes at Elmley Prison for an anti-knife crime film with the father of murdered Harry Potter actor Robert Knox.

Colin Knox, from Greenhithe, has campaigned against knife crime since the death of his 18-year-old son last year.

Rob died after being stabbed five times outside the Metro bar in Sidcup.

As well as calling for tougher penalties for knife-carriers, Mr Knox decided to make a film and take his message to the big screen.

Cold Kiss is being produced by Aaron Truss, who used to work with Rob, and its director is Nirpal Bhogal.

Mr Winstone, pictured, famed for performances in films such as Scum, Nil by Mouth, and Sexy Beast, has waived his fee.

Mr Knox said getting the film star

on board made a big difference.

"Some people think two guys met up in a pub, had a drink and decided to get together and make a film," he said.

"But it wasn't like that at all. This is a scripted, 15-minute, high-quality, short film.

"When Ray agreed to take part I was so excited. It's important we get the message out, but once we got Ray on board it was the cream on the cake."

Mr Winstone already had links to the Knox family. Rob and his brother, Jamie, had acted alongside him in King Arthur.

Earlier this year, Colin and Sally Knox, who are separated, travelled to Downing Street to meet Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Home Secretary Alan Johnson.

They handed over a letter outlining their proposals for all knife-carriers to face a mandatory six-month custodial sentence.



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## Jewel thief caught in US

A CROOK who used his charm to bamboozle his jailers into helping him escape from a Sheppey prison has been arrested in the US.

Juan Carlos Guzman-Betancourt used his good looks and charm to steal from wealthy guests at luxury hotels.

He was picked up by US border guards in the north eastern state of Vermont after entering the country from Canada.

The 33-year-old Colombian national, who has been likened to master US conman Frank Abagnale, portrayed by actor Leonardo DiCaprio in the film Catch Me If You Can, was identified using fingerprint analysis.

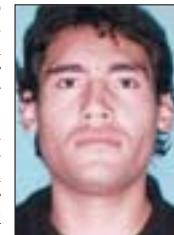
Guzman-Betancourt, pictured above, escaped from Standford Hill open prison four years ago. He had been serving a three-and-a-half-year sentence for thefts from the Mandarin Oriental, the Dorchester, the Four Seasons and the Savoy.

He escaped when he persuaded guards that he should be allowed to attend a dentist appointment alone.

At his trial in London, prosecutors at Southwark Crown Court described how the conman would identify a wealthy victim staying at a high-class hotel, wait for them to go out, then impersonate them to receptionists pretending to have lost his room key card.

Once inside, he would ring reception claiming to have forgotten the code to the safe, which he would then empty.

Guzman-Betancourt stole at least £150,000 of jewellery, cash and other goods in Britain alone, and worldwide, his six-year international crime spree could have netted him up to £500,000.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

## Man denies murder in stabbing of teenager

A MAN denied murdering Faversham teenager Adam Beaney when he appeared at Maidstone Crown Court on Friday.

Ricky Mount, 21, of Edward Vinson Drive, Faversham, will go on trial on January 18 next year. He was remanded in custody.

His mother Maxine Liddle, 44, of Lewis Close, Faversham, denied assisting an offender by disposing of a knife and clothing. She was released on conditional bail.

Mount is alleged to have killed Mr Beaney, 19, with a single stab wound at Faversham recreation ground on May 30.

## Lifeboat brings stricken yacht safely into port

SHEERNESS all-weather lifeboat went to the rescue of a yacht which suffered engine failure off the coast of Sheppey.

The vessel Aquila had been en route from East Anglia to Queenborough with one person onboard, a man in his 40s from London, when she broke down on Saturday at 2pm.

She had suffered engine failure about 4.5 miles north-east of Sheerness but was safely brought into port by the rescue vessel.

She was taken in tow for Queenborough Harbour, where she was secured.

## Police search for thieves of roadworks generator

POLICE are appealing for information about the theft of a generator stolen from roadworks in Dunkirk.

The yellow generator was being used to power the temporary traffic lights on Boughton Hill, which were being used to keep traffic flowing during the works.

It was taken between 9am on September 15 and 9am the following day.

Call Sittingbourne Police Station on 01795 419182 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## Arts and crafts to go on sale at latest church fayre

ST MICHAEL'S Church in Sittingbourne holds its second craft fayre on Saturday.

Items available will include hand-sewn goods, paintings, pottery, wood-turning, teddy bears, lace-making, jewellery and cards. For children there is a make-and-take stall run by the church's Brownie and Guide leaders.

The fayre will take place from 9.30am to 3.30pm. Twenty stalls are already booked.

# Put your questions

When the public are consulted on what they want the police to do, we often hear the phrase "more bobbies on the beat". Do you think this is a realistic request and that it even helps to cut crime?

Lorraine Bryant, Herne Bay

My researchers have carried out extensive work with the people of Kent to enable us to understand their concerns.

It is clear one of the top priorities is around the visibility of those tackling crime, and I believe the solution comes from a mix of roles within both the police and the local authorities. We also use our Neighbourhood Teams of police officers and Community Safety Units to carry out patrols on foot. That means they are able to have direct contact with the public.

**Why is Kent Police so keen on neighbourhood task teams?**

H Talbot, Ashford

The task teams are an essential part of neighbourhood policing but they also have a special

As part of our behind the scenes look at the work of Kent Police, our Chief Constable Michael Fuller agreed to answer questions direct from readers through our pages. Here are a selection of your questions and there will be more answers next week. If you have a question email [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk) and we will pass it on and print the answer.

ist role in the tackling of anti-social behaviour.

They deal with local priorities, set by the public. When the teams were first introduced as a trial in some areas of Kent they achieved a dramatic reduction in anti-social behaviour and a significant rise in public confidence. As a result they were then introduced across the entire county.

This has achieved such success the Policing Minister came to Kent to see it in action and asked for a briefing from me to better understand how it could be used by other forces.

**What is the policy in terms of responding to incidents of low-level crime (car break-ins etc)? It seems too often friends report incidents only for no action to be taken and rarely even a visit from an officer.**

T Nugent, Sittingbourne

We take all reported incidents seriously. These are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and assessed against the level of resources available at the time. We have three criteria when making that decision:

# On the road to saving lives

**TRAVELLING at speeds in excess of 120mph to emergency call-outs and arresting drunk drivers is an everyday occurrence for Kent's Road Policing Unit, but for our reporter Anna White, a day with our traffic cops proved to be more eventful than she had expected**

WHILE spending an eight-hour shift patrolling Kent's motorways and town roads in an unmarked police car, I expected a few motorists to be stopped, but within the space of just six hours on the roads, nine vehicles were stopped for various driving offences, most were fined and there was one arrest.

During the first two hours Sergeant James Derham and PC Geoff Greenwhite fined one girl who was texting while driving at 70mph, a teenager who was talking on the phone while driving, a man for not wearing his seatbelt, and three men for speeding.

Each of the speeding motorists was asked to sit in the police car to see proof of their dangerous speed and to have the chance to explain themselves to the officers.

The conversations between the officers and the drivers are all similar; the driver holds his hands up and admits driving too fast, accepts the fine and then panics about the possibility of losing their job and all the other consequences.



The tone from the officers was friendly but serious as they ask what the need for going too fast was, and they reminded the drivers of the risks they are taking by driving dangerously.

Sgt Derham said: "People are usually receptive when we stop them and they admit what they have done wrong, but you do get the odd one who wants to argue it."

"Sometimes people suggest we should be catching murders and other criminals instead of stopping people without a seatbelt, but our job is to save lives on the road."

To catch the speeding motorists meant hitting high speeds ourselves, but it was when the officers responded to an emergency call to a road collision that PC Greenwhite's high speed

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# to our police chief

- Immediate calls require an immediate response because there is a threat to life or a crime is in progress.
- High calls are where a prompt response will locate an offender or prevent a crime.
- Scheduled calls are for when response time is not critical and the best use of our resources means we can make an appointment.

In the case of vehicle crime, burglary or theft, if the incident falls into the scheduled category then investigators carry out a telephone interview and pass the details to the local Crime and Incident Management Unit, where it is reviewed by trained officers.

If they decide a face-to-face interview will help, or the victim is believed to be vulnerable, an officer will go to speak to them.

**Do you feel that the police are respected by most law abiding people at present or has the feeling of trust lessened over the years?**

Michael Dean, Folkestone  
When Sir Robert Peel founded the police serv-

ice it was on the basis of 'policing by consent'. This is still central to our approach to policing.

Public confidence in us is the key measure of our success. If people are confident that we treat people fairly and with respect, that we know their priorities and we are dealing with them, then we feel we are succeeding.

We feel it is important to monitor people's perceptions of how well we are meeting these demands. The majority of Kent residents, 82 per cent, say the police would treat them with respect if they had to contact them and 93 per cent of people say Kent Police is fair. In addition, 85 per cent of victims are satisfied with the overall service they received from us.

We are also working on being amongst the best in the country for dealing with the issues that matter to people in their area.

We are focused on ensuring we know what matters to people, are dealing with these things and making people aware of the results of these actions.

Public confidence in Kent Police has improved. We are now 18th out of 43 forces for

public confidence, and aim to be in the top 10. I feel this is something we can achieve.

**How well equipped is Kent Police to deal with online crime such as cyber bullying and fraud?**

Jeremy Holbrook, Canterbury

Our Serious Economic Crime Unit investigates the criminal use of the internet.

These detectives work alongside forensic experts who are able to obtain evidence from computers to show how criminals have used them. There is currently no offence of cyber bullying so prosecutions are brought under existing laws such as the misuse of communications and harassment.

When cases are reported, our Communications Intelligence Unit works to provide the evidence to bring a prosecution.

We also work closely with the finance and communications industries, not only to prosecute those who misuse the internet but also to stop criminal activity and to promote responsible online behaviour.



**IMPORTANT TO YOU:** Chief Constable Mike Fuller is answering your questions about policing in the county



**LAYING DOWN THE LAW:** Opposite, Sgt Derham hands out a fine for texting while driving, while above PC Greenwhite speaks to the man pulled over because of a flat tyre, who ended up with a lot more to think about

training really showed. Although the officers checked I was comfortable with speed before I got in the car, when we reached top speeds of about 120mph I was grateful to have a police hat to hide behind.

But within minutes the emergency call was abandoned as another patrol had got there first and PC Greenwhite returned to normal speed... until the next time.

He said: "It's like the TV programme Police, Camera, Action and you just try to get there as quickly as possible. It's what we are trained to do."

Near the end of the 2-10pm shift I had seen more than I had expected, but it was a flat tyre that proved the most eventful stop of all.

Sgt Derham spotted the deflated tyre on a people-carrier-style car, which was heading toward Chatham, and he decided to pull the driver over to let him know. But as a procedure the officers ran a check on the vehicle – which showed the car had no MOT.

While PC Greenwhite checked the car and talked to driver he smelt alcohol, and almost inevitably a breath test proved the driver was over the limit. He was arrested on the spot.

The driver was taken to Medway Police Station, where it took two-hours to take a blood sample at the man's request (at 48mg/100 he was over the legal drink-drive limit of 35mg but if it's under 50 the person can elect to have a blood or urine sample

taken) then process him before he was released on bail.

In this case the man was dropped off at his home and then it was time to head back to the unit's base at Coldharbour, in Aylesford, just outside Maidstone, but not before the officers stopped a male motorcyclist for travelling at more than 100mph, who will now be summoned to court.

I found it an eye-opener to see how many people risk both their own life and the lives of others on our roads, but to Sgt Derham and PC Greenwhite it was an average shift catching motorists who choose to break the law.

Sgt Derham added: "We don't just stop people for the sake of it, it's because we want to reduce the amount of deaths and accidents that happen on Kent's roads.

"We are the ones who have to tell the families their loved one has been involved in a collision or, even worse, died and that is not a nice thing to do. The message we are really trying to push is to take more care on the roads and save more lives."

The entire Kent Roads Policing Unit establishment is made up of 147 officers with 25 motorcycles and about 22 cars.

• *Police have confirmed that the man who gave a blood sample after he was arrested on suspicion of drink driving is due to appear in court later this month after he returned a positive result.*

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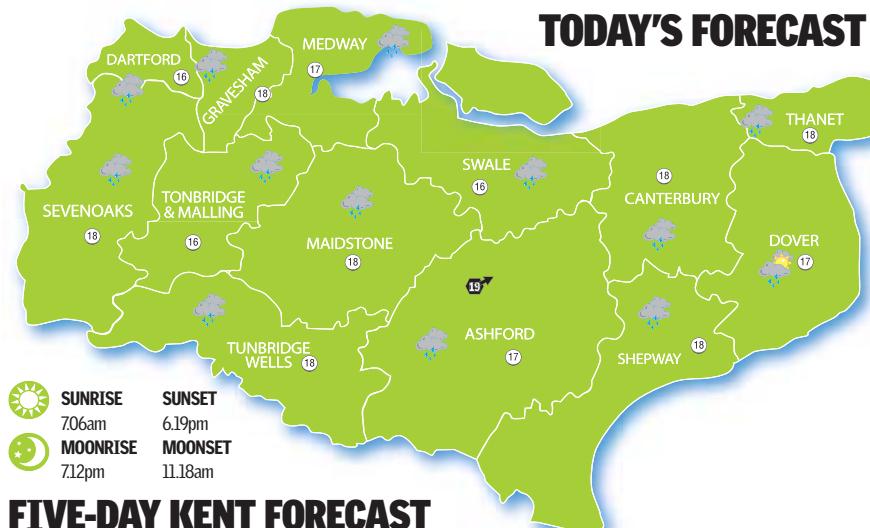
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## WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

<b>Chatham</b>	Saturday	5:24pm	5.7m
	Sunday	6:25pm	5.4m
<b>Dover</b>	Saturday	3:29pm	6.0m
	Sunday	4:45pm	5.6m
<b>Dungeness</b>	Saturday	3:34pm	7.3m
	Sunday	4:30pm	6.8m
<b>Ramsgate</b>	Saturday	3:59pm	4.6m
	Sunday	5:15pm	4.3m
<b>Sheerness</b>	Saturday	5:13pm	5.4m
	Sunday	6:14pm	5.2m
<b>Whitstable</b>	Saturday	5:13pm	5.0m
	Sunday	6:15pm	4.7m



**HE'S A STAR:** Winner Ivan Jackson, left, receives his award from Forum manager Allen Forder

## Ivan's a real star in the community

A MULTIPLE Sclerosis sufferer who has helped others as a volunteer for 25 years has been presented with The Forum shopping centre's Community Star Award.

The award recognizes the contribution individuals can make to people in Swale.

Ivan Jackson, who has lived with MS for 26 years, was nominated by the Multiple Sclerosis Society for his continued voluntary work with the charity, including being a trustee, vice chairman of the Sittingbourne branch and serving on the national committee.

For the past ten years he has been a volunteer for the Kent regional team, particularly helping volunteers at branch level.

Wendy Cork, Sittingbourne's branch secretary at the MS Society, said: "We are delighted Ivan has won the Community Star Award, and it's great to see The Forum taking an interest in the community and championing societies."

Forum manager Allen Forder said: "Ivan is a deserving winner of the award as he really is a star in the community."



## AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

<b>Amsterdam</b>	12°C	<b>Madrid</b>	26°C
<b>Athens</b>	25°C	<b>New York</b>	20°C
<b>Barcelona</b>	26°C	<b>Paris</b>	14°C
<b>Beijing</b>	22°C	<b>Rome</b>	24°C
<b>Bombay</b>	26°C	<b>Sydney</b>	18°C
<b>Cape Town</b>	18°C	<b>Tenerife</b>	25°C
<b>Cardiff</b>	13°C	<b>Tokyo</b>	20°C
<b>Gibraltar</b>	23°C	<b>Vancouver</b>	15°C
<b>Hong Kong</b>	31°C	<b>Warsaw</b>	13°C
<b>Las Palmas</b>	26°C	<b>Wellington</b>	10°C

## FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	
<b>Ashford</b>	20°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	<b>Gravesend</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	18°C
<b>Canterbury</b>	20°C	18°C	15°C	16°C	<b>Maidstone</b>	20°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	17°C
<b>Chatham</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	<b>Ramsgate</b>	20°C	18°C	15°C	16°C	16°C
<b>Dartford</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	<b>Rochester</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	18°C
<b>Dover</b>	18°C	17°C	15°C	14°C	<b>Sevenoaks</b>	18°C	17°C	14°C	15°C	16°C
<b>Faversham</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	<b>Sittingbourne</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	18°C
<b>Folkestone</b>	18°C	17°C	15°C	14°C	<b>Tonbridge</b>	18°C	18°C	15°C	15°C	16°C
<b>Gillingham</b>	20°C	19°C	16°C	16°C	<b>Tun Wells</b>	18°C	18°C	15°C	15°C	16°C

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## QUESTION & ANSWER

### VERNON HULL



## Q & A

The Medway NHS Trust board chairman spoke to **Simon Robinson** about his role within Medway Maritime Hospital and his rock and roll son, Tom, who is better known to music lovers as Kid Harpoon

#### Q Tell us a little about yourself.

**A** I've lived in Rochester for the past 30 years, I've been married for 28 years to Kathy, who works at the University of Kent, and I have one son, Tom, who is a professional musician.

#### Q What is your position within Medway NHS Trust and what does it entail?

**A** I chair the trust board, which is the key decision-making body at the hospital.

It involves me working closely with the chief executive and the board on all major operational issues which affect the development of the hospital.

#### Q You played a key role in Medway gaining foundation trust status. What is this and why is it beneficial?

**A** Foundation trusts are a completely new kind of NHS organisation. They are about the NHS working more closely with its community, rather than being run by politicians in central government.

They are still accountable to Parliament, but local people, who can become members, have a much greater say in running their local hospital. There are two types of membership: staff membership and public membership.

Staff automatically become members and anyone living in the UK and over the age of 14 can become a public member.

Members can attend workshops, take part in

discussions, influence changes to services and elect representatives from the membership on to the council of governors, who then appoint the chair, chief executive and non-executive directors.

Our status as a foundation trust is great news for Medway and Swale because it means that people using the hospital – not just those working in it – have a greater say in its running and the types of services it offers.

KID HARPOON  
SINCE



#### Q What are the best parts of your job?

**A** Working with a whole range of very able and dedicated people, as well as making a contribution to an organisation which is so vital to our community.

#### Q And the worst?

**A** Taking tough decisions which have to be taken, but which you know cannot please everyone.

#### Q What challenges does the trust face in the coming years?

**A** Obviously the likely restrictions on funding which are the consequence of the banking crisis.

But also the need to develop a strong focus throughout the hospital on improving the patient experience.

#### Q How confident are you that the trust is equipped to deal with swine flu?

**A** I'm very confident. We have plans in place, which are continually tested, revised and updated, to ensure that we can cope with any surge in demand for our services. This applies to any situation that may arise, not just pandemic flu.

#### Q What do you like to do in your spare time?

**A** I'm a Gillingham FC season ticket holder. I enjoy all kinds of music, but I particularly like my son Tom's.

His album [pictured above] has just been released and his stage name is Kid Harpoon.

I also enjoy walking and travelling, and reading history and biographies.



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Vintage Jaguar cars go through the Channel Tunnel. Search 'Jaguar'



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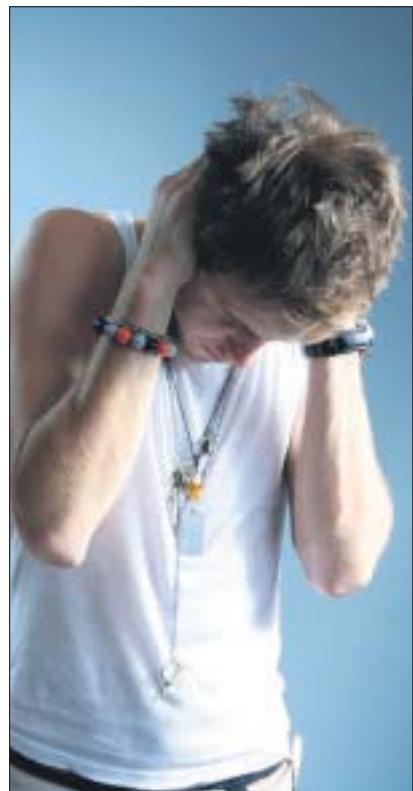
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## EDITOR'S CHOICE

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# Warning: Too much caffeine could kill



**OVERDOSE:** Caffeine pills and energy drinks used to aid study could make you ill and put you in hospital

YOUNG people who consume too many energy drinks or caffeine pills are risking their health and in extreme cases death, according to a campaign group.

The warning comes after a KCA young person's drug and alcohol worker became increasingly concerned by personal accounts of problems and worries from young people across Swale.

One 18-year-old from Sheppey said: "An overdose of tablets gave me diarrhoea, heart palpitations and made me really shaky."

### Energy drinks

Mixing energy drinks with other substances, such as alcohol, can cause hospitalisation.

A 16-year-old from Sittingbourne said: "I used to drink vodka and energy drinks together all the time but one night I just collapsed on the street, my heart was beating so fast and I was raced to hospital, I thought I was gonna die."

Zara Rahemtulla, KCA's young person's early intervention worker, said: "I noticed a sharp increase in discussion about the problems associated with caffeine drinks and pills among some of the young people that I work with.

"Despite a careful search, I couldn't find much information about their effects, so we have developed a detailed briefing for our staff and other professionals to provide accurate information and clarify the risks involved."

There is also growing concern that high levels of consumption among a minority of

■ BY NICK AMES

young people may be having an adverse effect on their learning and behaviour at school.

Energy drinks and caffeine pills are widely used to reduce drowsiness and as an aid to study and revision.

The average 237ml energy drink contains 80mg caffeine, the amount in energy tablets can vary from 25mg to 200mg. This compares to 100mg in the average cup of coffee.

"When used as recommended, one energy drink or tablet is not hazardous for anyone in good health" says KCA's director of research Neil Hunt.

"Caffeine doses of 200mg or higher can cause unpleasant symptoms such as nausea or headaches. Other symptoms can include an abnormal heart beat, anxiety, panic, overheating and dehydration. In rare cases, consumption of large numbers of caffeine pills has been fatal."

"People may experience a 'come down' effect after consuming stimulant drinks or tablets as their energy levels will quickly deplete, leaving them tired and irritable."

"Also, caffeine can react with some prescribed medicines. If you are taking prescribed medicines, it is advisable to consult your doctor about the safety of using energy drinks or caffeine pills."

KCA's advice is not to exceed recommendations on packs of energy tablets and to be aware that combining energy drinks and caffeine pills can lead to excess caffeine levels that can cause unpleasant symptoms.



**CHARITY AUCTION:** (From left) Patsy Dixon, Demelza's Sarah Marsh and artist Ben Oakley at fundraiser event

## Hirst postcard delivers £2,000 at Demelza event

A POSTCARD designed by Damien Hirst raised £2,000 for Demelza House when it was sold off at a charity auction.

The internationally-renowned artist was one of several people who donated work for the Sittingbourne-based children's hospice at the Art and Soul Auction at the Hotel du Vin, Tunbridge Wells, last Wednesday evening.

Mark Wallinger – designer of the White Horse sculpture due to be built at Ebbsfleet – also gave up a print that sold for £480.

Work by Kent-based artist Ben Oakley sold for a total of £850.

Organiser Patsy Dixon said: "It was a great evening with many art-buyers and supporters of Demelza House filling the auction room.

"There was a great atmosphere and it was quite tense at times."

"The bidding for the works by Damien Hirst was quite furious, and when the final piece raised £2,000 the room was filled with applause."

Money raised from the auction will go towards Demelza's fundraising target of £7 million.

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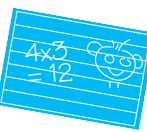
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## BREAK TIME



THE BEST: Gordon Henderson, left, and Sioux Peto with the two winning entries

### Little artists' angelic message

THE two winning entries in this year's Litter Angels competition are being displayed at a gallery.

Children from across Swale took the opportunity to design their own posters showing the damage littering causes.

They were split into two age groups for judging – five to nine-year-olds and ten to 13-year-olds.

For the second year in a row both winners came from the same school. Bapchild and Tonge CofE Primary School took the honours this year after Regis Manor School swept the board last year.

The winner of the five to nine category was Kathleen Rush, while Ashley Hudson took the prize for the older age group.

The winning posters have been framed and are hanging in the

Polka Dot Art Centre in London Road, Teynham.

Every finalist will receive a certificate, with the two winners getting a plaque and £25 of book tokens. Their schools will also receive book tokens.

The prizes will be presented by Gordon Henderson, director of Swale Community Action Project, and Sioux Peto, chair of Swale Arts Forum, during an awards ceremony at the school later this month.

Both said they were impressed by the standard of entries.

Mr Henderson, who is also the Conservative parliamentary candidate for Sittingbourne and Sheppey, said: "I would like to thank all the children who took part in this year's competition and congratulate the winners."

# Dramatic opportunities offered by new course

■ BY NICK AMES

A SCHOOL has announced it will offer a new course to students which could open the door to a career making movies or TV programmes.

Sittingbourne Community College is adding screenwriting for film and television to its syllabus.

This course will allow students to express their own ideas when it comes to dramatic art and study the works of legends of the small and big screen.

Pupils will be able to achieve an ABC level three award in the subject, which is equivalent to an A-level.

The new course will start next September, but staff are expecting a high number of applications due to the nature of the studies and the lack of availability for such an award elsewhere in the county.

Course tutor Kelly Hickey said: "The screenwriting course is such an exciting prospect for students.

"As far as I am aware there is nothing like this offered at a post-16 level anywhere else in the county."

"This is a real opportunity for young creatives to sink their teeth into a challenging but rewarding subject, which will give them the skills and know-how to produce professional, industry-standard screenplays. It is so popular that we already



LEGENDS: Studying classic films such as Star Wars will help students express their own ideas

have students on the waiting list for September 2010."

The full-time course will cover the technical and creative aspects of screenwriting.

Kelly added: "The course will teach students screenwriting from all angles and give them the skills they need to take their knowledge into further education or industry-related jobs.

"Being part of a Specialist Arts College means we are in a unique position to offer students on the course the best available resources and contacts.

"We have access to some fantastic facilities here, including an editing suite, recording studio and drama

theatres, and also hope to take the students on industry-related excursions and trips throughout the year.

"My aim as teacher of the course is to offer students the best possible guidance and advice I can and help them develop their skills to the best of their ability.

"We can also help with applications to industry-related careers, competitions and further education."

In addition to this, students can link up with other subjects to produce and develop the films they write, for example, they can write a script, which the drama students act out, the film-making pupils record and the music students put the soundtrack to.

SEND your schools news and pictures to [yourswale@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:yourswale@kosmedia.co.uk). You can also upload your video clips of schools events on to [www.yourkenttv.co.uk](http://www.yourkenttv.co.uk)

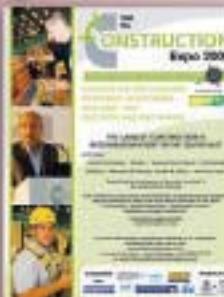
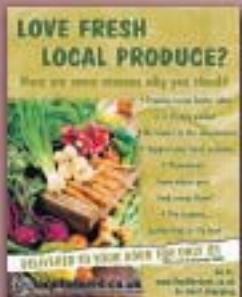
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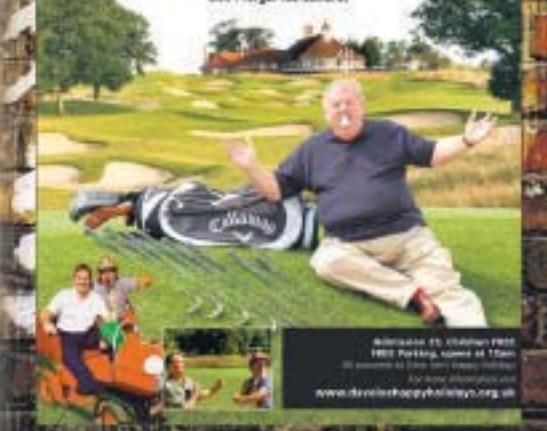
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# Church art exhibition offers sense of divine

A UNIQUE display of contemporary religious icons is to be held at the historic Anglican church of St Peter's in Oare as part of the 2009 Canterbury Festival.

Leading iconographers from around the world are sending works for inclusion in Divine Dimensions, which also features music and services from the Orthodox Church.

A screen has been commissioned from local craftsmen, which will allow a traditional display of the images at the altar rail of the 12th century church.

The screen symbolises the place where Heaven and Earth meet.

Parish priest the Rev Carolin Clapperton said: "We hope that through art and music, people of all faiths and none will come to St Peter's and find here a place of peace, a place for prayer and quiet reflection, and that the exhibition Divine Dimensions will indeed lead people into a sense of the divine."

The installation will be open to the public from 11am to 5pm each Wednesday to Sunday from October 17 to November 1.

Divine Dimensions includes Eastern Orthodox Vespers, Gregorian Vespers, a Choral

Evensong, an interplay of music and poetry readings in honour of Philip Sherrard, a writer who reflects the spirit of the exhibit, and an illustrated lecture by Sir Richard Temple, a leading authority on icons and their symbolism.

Icons are particularly associated with Eastern Orthodox Christianity and offer what some might find an unfamiliar depiction of sacred subjects.

A wide range of styles will be included in the installation, which unlike any ordinary exhibition will be a living part of the work of the church.

## Grant

It is thought this is the first time an Orthodox iconostasis has been installed in an Anglican church.

The exhibition has been supported with a grant of £20,300 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The installation is the idea of local artist Ann Welch, who invited fellow iconographers from this highly specialised field to submit their work.

The twenty-three artists include the Russian master Sergei Taracyan, Irina Bradley, whose work has been displayed throughout Russia and worldwide, England's Aidan Hart of the Prince's School of Liturgical Art and Dr Stephane René, a leading neo-Coptic iconographer.



## Your chance to discuss issues face-to-face

REFUSE collections, recycling and litter will be on the agenda when Swale council holds its first officer surgery tomorrow.

The drop-in session for the public will be held at Faversham District Office in the Alexandra Centre between 2pm and 4pm on Thursday.

At the first session, Peter Chegwidden, the council's waste minimisation and recycling officer, and Jonathan Longley, the council's senior Streetscene officer will be available to talk to residents on a one-to-one basis.

This will enable people to sit and talk through matters in a quiet and relaxing atmosphere, and on a more personal basis.

The council said there are a number of advantages for residents. Not only will they be able to speak face-to-face with someone who can help them, but they may also benefit from any action resulting from feedback that officers receive.

Alan Turner, cleansing services manager, said: "Within the cleansing team we have always felt that being out among the public is a vital means of gauging opinion and concerns, especially when very local matters need to be understood."

"We want to create a cleaner and greener Swale for everyone and we know that everyone wants this, and this is in addition to our work patrolling the streets."

Councillor Cindy Davis, executive portfolio holder for the environment, supports this initiative and said: "The plan is to run these surgeries on a regular basis at all three of our offices."

"This work will be in addition to our existing programme of work. Our officers do give free talks to clubs, societies and other groups on request, as well as the work that they do with local schools."

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# yourswaleblogger

County education chief Sarah Hohler says the Government needs to take a broader view of Kent's schools...



# Another own goal with Balls still playing political football

YOU can always tell when a general election is getting closer.

Labour sends out its vanguard of ministers to act as knights in shining armour.

They announce with confidence that, through their intervention, they will be able to correct all wrongs and save the world.

Last month it was Ed Balls's turn. He explained that an educational revolution had taken place and Labour's plan to eradicate failure was almost complete. Where targets had not been met, his advisers were working with education officials.

Watching Mr Balls stigmatise schools brought to mind the phrase 'There are many ways to skin a cat'. Should we be denouncing Kent's education system and its schools in the National Challenge? I think not.

I would suggest that rather than taking one arbitrary target, we put Mr Balls's one statistic into a broader perspective.

Almost 73 per cent of Kent students

achieved five A\*-C grades this year, about five per cent above the national average, and an improvement of 4.8 per cent on last year. Nationally, the rise in A\* to C pass rates was only up 1.4 per cent.

We have higher numbers of young people achieving five A\*-C grades at GCSE than any other local authority. This includes English and maths and accounts for 51.9 per cent of the school population in Kent.

Ofsted has deemed three of Kent's National Challenge schools 'outstanding'. A further 11 have been judged as 'good'. Kent has an exemplary education system that produces excellent results. We realise every child is unique and that education is not 'one size fits all'.

Kent is bucking the trend, with a declining number of young people not in education, employment or training.

We have been working hard encouraging the establishment of academies such as Folkestone, Leigh and New Line Learning in Maidstone. We have also encouraged feder-

ations between grammar and high schools.

At King Ethelbert in Birchington, GCSE results (including English and maths at A\*-C) were up 20 to 34 per cent this year.

We are proud of all our schools. We are not afraid to intervene where it is required.

We are confident that all our National Challenge schools are on track to meet the target by 2011. A third have already met it, which is excellent.

We always welcome additional support and advice where it adds value and will discuss this further with the Department for Children, Schools and Families and our schools, who are all eager to work together to do the best for all children and young people in Kent.

I hope Mr Balls will take up our invitation to visit Kent and see success in action.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** All blogs are supplied with full name and address of the authors. They do not reflect the view of the newspaper but are designed to give our readers the chance to air their views.

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**Jon Coates** on **01303 817048**, or email him

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# yourletters

## TALK TIME

### ANDREW RICHARDSON

The finds manager at Canterbury Archaeological Trust, on the preservation of finds at a mass Anglo-Saxon grave in Sittingbourne and how the public can see more.



#### What was discovered?

There were 228 graves uncovered and they dated from the sixth and seventh century.

We also found a large number of glass items and beads, as well as iron items, such as the remains of swords, shields and spearheads.

**And work to preserve them is still going on isn't it?**  
Yes, that's right and it is being carried out in public. Usually this sort of preservation work is done behind closed doors in a museum somewhere but we have volunteers and professionals working in what used to be a shop in The Forum. Anyone who is interested is invited to go along and see the work for themselves.

#### What exactly is going on?

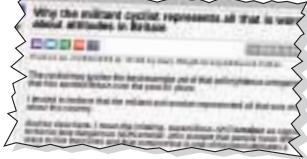
The items are being cleaned up and stabilised – in some cases they have to be removed from the soil in which they were embedded.

We have a team of volunteers who are all supervised by experts. They are doing the work and it is expected to last some time.

#### Other objects are already on display though?

That's right – they are on show in a shop front opposite the temporary laboratory, again this is in The Forum shopping centre.

## YOUR LETTERS



### Nazi was a poor choice of word

It would be a great and unforgivable shame if the word 'Nazi', the name of one of the vilest, most murderous and cruel political movements in recent history, were to be devalued and trivialised by its use as a weak-minded, off-the-cuff insult in a minor tiff about cycling.

Perhaps Mr Wright should read a book occasionally and, as a journalist, consider his words more carefully.

Adrian Rowland, by email.

### Blogger needs to get over himself

I cycle regularly as it is the easiest way to get around town. Little did I realise that my use of a mode of transport would make me any type of "Nazi".

If the author could get past his obsessive loathing, which must be doing nothing for his blood pressure, and actually investigated the recommendation in the report he is citing, he would find that the change would only place onus on the motorist in civil law (not criminal).

Thus where the cyclist is at



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doubt cycling could help the quality of his journalism.

Stow, comment posted on blog at [www.yourmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.yourmaidstone.co.uk)

## What about all the uninsured drivers?

Gary – if you're writing this nonsense in the vain hope of landing a shockjock job at your local radio station, think again.

Cyclists are this week's Muslims, or single mums, gays, lesbians or Jews, or whoever people like you, the 'Angry Tendency', take exception to.

Your readers will know that three people a week – pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, passengers – die at the hands of uninsured drivers.

Now if you care about road safety you might want to consider that, and you might want to vent your spleen in the direction of the man who buys a car for fifty quid, and doesn't bother to maintain it, MOT it or insure it, knowing full well that it's cheaper to see it crushed, and pay the £200 fine.

Have a nice day, or, if it's not happening, have a lie down...

Simon Legg, comment posted on blog at [www.yoursrale.co.uk](http://www.yoursrale.co.uk)



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fault, the cyclist would be found at fault. This really isn't too difficult to understand, and I doubt it would suddenly make me reckless – the pain of a crash with a car somewhat outweighs civil legal considerations.

I would urge Mr Wright to try cycling from time to time. It can be quite therapeutic and might even help in the anger management issues from which he appears to be suffering.

Although, unfortunately, I

## Poor taste to say we just want cash

Regarding your assertion that cyclists would take advantage of 'Mr Truck driver' for compensation is in extremely poor taste indeed, given the fact that in London alone, so far this year, ten cyclists have died as a result of being hit by HGVs. And how

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many have received compensation? None. In fact, if you kill someone while driving, regardless of the vehicle, chances are you'll be looking at nothing more than a slap on the wrist and a maybe a couple of points on the licence if you're unlucky.

Life is cheap indeed if you're a cyclist or pedestrian on UK roads.

Helen Booth, comment posted on blog at [www.yourmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.yourmaidstone.co.uk)

## Cyclists should take more care on roads

Your comments regarding cyclists are in my experience quite true, many times have I seen cyclists riding through red lights or the wrong way down a one-way street and even on pavements – terrorising pedestrians.

I do think they justify it to themselves in some way and so perhaps by getting them to contribute financially to the upkeep of roads, they might take the laws that car drivers and motorcyclists abide by, seriously.

I'm not anti-cyclists by the way and I'm not anti-smokers – they should be able to enjoy what they do in the same way that drinkers can.

Clare Read, comment posted on blog at [www.yourmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.yourmaidstone.co.uk)



## Is this smart water the stuff of magic?

It sounds like magic, how does the SmartWater get on to the rubbish?

Basil James, comment posted on web story at [www.yourswale.co.uk](http://www.yourswale.co.uk)

## How much is it and where do I get it?

This SmartWater sounds an interesting tool in stopping flytipping, but I have a few questions about the duty of care in using it and its availability. Does the householder have to purchase the SmartWater or the disposal contractor?

If so, how much does it cost and where can it be obtained? Does it work on every surface?

Richard Valentine, comment posted on web story at [www.yourswale.co.uk](http://www.yourswale.co.uk)

## Enforcement officers do the work for you

SmartWater solutions are sprayed on to the waste by enforcement officers on behalf of the resident.

Once dry this is invisible to the eye unless exposed to UV light.

Flytippers will not know if the waste they are carrying is coated with SmartWater, and will run the risk of being caught.

Melanie Hill, comment posted on web story at [www.yourswale.co.uk](http://www.yourswale.co.uk)

## Texting £3 can make all the difference

I would like to thank your readers for helping to make the World's Biggest Coffee Morning a success.

We hope to generate more than £200,000 from the event in Kent and every penny makes a difference to people living with cancer.

It's not too late to make your cup count as we have now a service for you to make a £3 donation by text message. Why not donate the cost of your coffee? Text 'BREW' to 70123.

Donate £3 and make a difference.

Laura Thornton, Kent fundraising manager for Macmillan Cancer Support, by email

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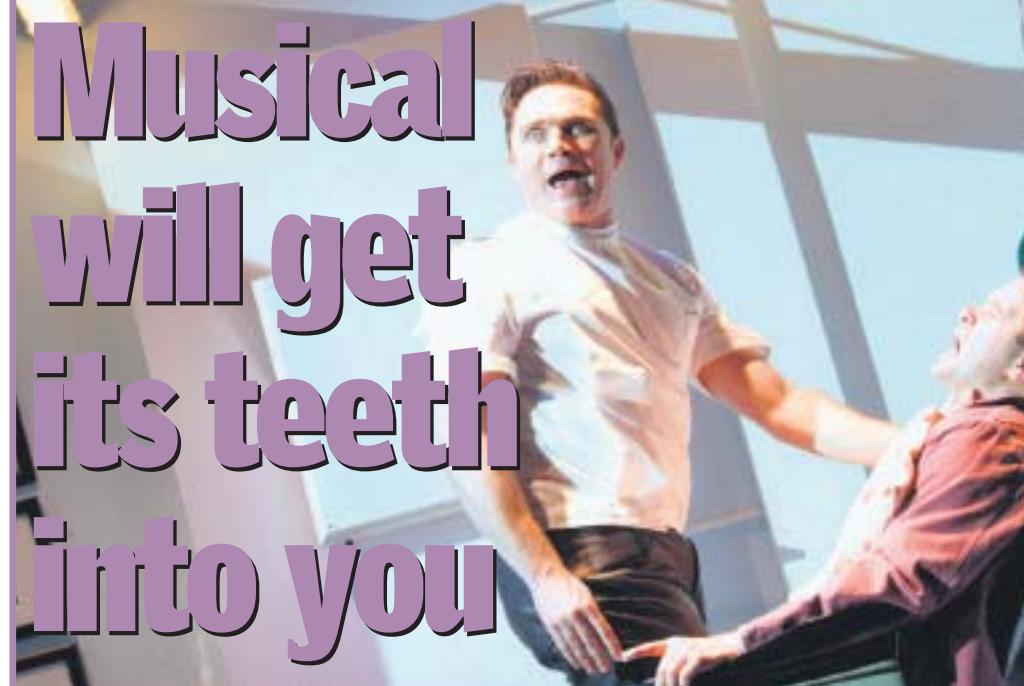
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## Little Shop of Horrors show arrives from the West End

A GREEN-fingered shop assistant gets blood on his hands when he discovers a very special carnivorous plant.

The enormously popular Little Shop of Horrors visits Kent this week, direct from a successful season in London's West End. This funny, family-friendly musical will captivate audiences with its unforgettable songs, colourful characters and its giant animatronic, man-eating plant.

Dancing on Ice star Clare Buckfield plays the delicious Audrey, while former EastEnders actor Alex Ferns stars as the deranged dentist.

Damian Humbley steps into the shoes of downtrodden Seymour, a floral assistant who believes he will never win the heart of beautiful colleague Audrey. But one day, just after a sudden eclipse of the sun, he finds a mysterious plant and takes it home.

The unusual specimen does not respond to the normal horticultural routines and looks as if it might die, despite Seymour's most tender attentions.

When he accidentally pricks his finger and draws blood, the plant's enthusiastic response appears to solve the mystery.

But as Audrey II grows bigger and bigger, how long can Seymour keep supplying the carnivorous plant with fresh blood?

### LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Running until Saturday, October 10  
Assembly Hall Theatre,  
Tunbridge Wells



plant, Little Shop of Horrors is very popular with amateur dramatic groups and schools. This enduring success is probably due to the show's black humour, catchy songs and the larger-than-life personality of its villainous star.

Ferns, who plays Scrivello, became the man viewers loved to hate when he played abusive husband Trevor Morgan in EastEnders.

He made an abrupt exit from the soap in 2002 when Trevor was killed in an explosion.

Buckfield rose to fame in Grange Hill and 2.4 Children before moving on to other acting roles. She won new fans when she came second in the 2007 series of Dancing on Ice and now shows off her singing and dancing skills as soft-hearted beauty, Audrey.

Tickets are priced from £14.50 to £29.50. To book, phone the box office on 01892 530613/532072 or alternatively visit the website at [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk).



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**DAVE LEE**

Friday, October 10

Hempstead House Hotel, Sittingbourne



LOCAL legend Dave Lee is hitting the road to raise money for two good causes this autumn.

The highly popular comedian usually gives an annual comedy show at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury, but it has been put on hold for a couple of years while the Canterbury theatre is closed for redevelopment. Anyone who is missing their fix of Lee humour can still see him in action during the Dave Lee Comedy Dinners.

Taking place at venues across East Kent, the events will give fans the chance to enjoy a three-course meal, games, an auction and entertainment from the funny man himself. There will also be the opportunity to ask Lee questions during the evening.

Organised by the Friends of the Marlowe, the events' proceeds will go to the New Marlowe Theatre Development Trust and Dave Lee's Happy Holidays charity.

The event starts at 7pm for 7.30pm and tickets cost £39.50. To book call David Roberts on 01227 772969. Two more comedy dinners will be held at venues in Dover and Canterbury during October.

**BEN SANDS**

Wednesday, October 14



The Chimney Boy, Faversham

WITH a musical heritage in his family, Ben Sands has become a respected performer in his own right.

Born on a small farm near the Irish village of Mayobridge, in the foothills of the Mourne Mountains, Sands was the fourth of seven children. The family had a long history of music, singing and storytelling, while his father Mick was a real character whose songs, stories and fiddle-playing were legendary.

His mother Bridie was a fine singer and accordion player, but she also had two other claims to fame – her father was the noted Burren poet, Owen Connolly, and her mother was related to the Brontë family.

Life on the farm was enhanced by music and their family home became some-



thing of a centre for singers and musicians in the area. Having tried his hand at a variety of instruments, Sands joined The Sands Family from the early 70s before following his brothers Tommy and Colum into a

successful solo career.

The concert starts at 8.30pm and tickets cost £5 for Faversham Folk Club members and £6 for non-members. Entry is free for under-18s. For more information call 01795 423674.

**CLAIRE MARTIN**

Saturday, October 10



Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury

ONE of the world's finest jazz singers, Claire Martin is renowned for her superb live shows.

Her performance in Canterbury is a 'must see' for jazz fans, as Martin has been voted Best Vocalist at the BBC/British Jazz Awards a record five times. As the presenter of Jazz Line-Up on BBC Radio 3 and a regular performer at festivals worldwide, Martin has won fans all over the globe and enjoyed a critically acclaimed run at New York's Oak Room.

She will be singing songs from her new album, A Modern Art, which features a personal repertoire including both classic songs and original material. From the Rodgers and Hart number Everybody Today, to work by more contemporary artists such as Mark Winkler, Donald Fagen and Michael Franks.

The title track takes a wry look at celebrity culture, for Martin is always keen to perform new material and looks to both sides of the Atlantic for songwriters.

The concert starts at 7.45pm and tickets cost £15. Book online at [www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk](http://www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk) or call the box office on 01227 769075.

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**SWALE LEISURE**

## There'll be magic in the air with Paul Daniels

MAGICIAN Paul Daniels will be telling some of his favourite showbiz stories in Boughton-under-Blean on Friday.

During the two-hour show, Daniels will be demonstrating the skills that made him the country's top magician. The show takes place at Boughton-under-Blean Village Hall, near Faversham, at 7.30pm and tickets cost £12.50/£10. Book on 01227 751225 or visit [www.starsaroundtown.co.uk](http://www.starsaroundtown.co.uk).

## See all things crafty at St Michael's Church

FIND a unique gift or treat yourself to something new at a craft fair taking place in Sittingbourne this weekend.

St Michael's Church in High Street will host the event from 9.30am to 3.30pm on Saturday, where shoppers will find hand-sewn goods, paintings, pottery, jewellery, wood turning, teddy bears, refreshments and more. Visit [www.saintsinsittingbourne.org.uk](http://www.saintsinsittingbourne.org.uk).

## Live gig will Sabotage your Friday evening

FOR a great night of live music, catch Sabotage performing live in Faversham later this week.

The five-piece band plays a variety of classic pop/punk, indie and rock hits. Find out more about them at [www.sabotagetheband.co.uk](http://www.sabotagetheband.co.uk). Sabotage will be playing at the Swan & Harlequin in Conduit Street at 9pm on Friday. Call the pub on 01795 532341.

## Heart Foundation to pump money into Kent

VOLUNTARY and community groups could benefit from grants of up to £2,000 from the British Heart Foundation.

With the Help a Heart Grant programme, projects which promote healthy lifestyles or improve the lives of heart patients and their carers could receive a cash award. To find out more visit [www.bhf.org.uk/helpaheartgrant](http://www.bhf.org.uk/helpaheartgrant), or call 0207 554 0426.

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CREATION (PG)



In the year that marks the bicentenary of Charles Darwin's birth, Jon Amiel's biopic focuses on the turbulent period before Darwin committed his radical theories to parchment and reshaped science.

ADVENTURELAND (15)



In the summer of 1987, a college graduate takes a part-time job in a theme park and sets himself up for heartbreak when he falls for a co-worker who is having a secret affair with the park's handyman.

AWAY WE GO (15)



Sam Mendes's film paints a vivid portrait of contemporary America and its foibles as expectant parents leave behind their blissful backwoods home for the sake of their imminent child's prospects.

# Truth be told, Ricky is just in it for the laughs

■ BY KATE WHITING

YOU'VE got to hand it to Ricky Gervais. Not many men could take the kind of insults thrown at him in his latest film – let alone write them in the first place.

The Invention Of Lying, which Gervais wrote, directed and stars in, sees him play loser Mark Bellison – unlucky in love and work but also the only person who can lie in an alternate reality where everyone tells the truth.

So when Mark goes to meet his beautiful blind date Anna (Jennifer Garner), for example, and asks her how she is, she takes one look at him and without a second thought, states: "Depressed and pessimistic about our date."

Surely even Gervais – known for his self-deprecating humour – occasionally reaches saturation point, when the insults start to hurt?

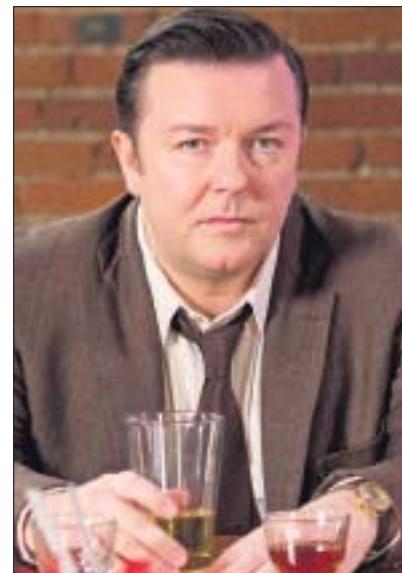
"No," he laughs. "I love it, and I don't know if that's because I've got no ego at all or such a big ego that nothing can hurt me. Someone insulting me makes me laugh."

The film, which recently had its world premiere at the Toronto Film Festival, boasts a talented cast, including rising star Jonah Hill, as Mark's suicidal neighbour, the "genetically-perfect" Rob Lowe, as his work and love rival, and cameos from Jason Bateman and his comedy-writing partner Stephen Merchant.

For all his Emmy and Bafta award-winning success, Reading-born Gervais still finds it amazing that he has become one of Hollywood's golden boys.

"I can't believe these people want to work with me. Truth is, I'm a bit of a chancer," he adds, flashing that famously cheeky grin.

"I'm very lucky to be in this position and no one's found me out yet."



**HONESTLY:** Ricky Gervais is still amazed by his success

While the film marks his directorial debut, the 48-year-old has long been writing his own material – and broke into Hollywood after Extras and the US version of The Office became hits across the pond.

Since starring in last year's Ghost Town, he's lost some of the David Brent paunch from hitting the gym in the States, but he insists he won't change in other ways and will not be sucked into the LA movie-machine.

"I don't think I play the Hollywood game as such – I'm not really an actor for hire. I've done the odd bits, but they're either returning the

VIEW THIS PREVIEW

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favour or just for a laugh. I sort of create my own work, really. I own my own labour, so I don't feel that I'm quite part of that mill yet and I don't know if I ever will be or want to be.

"And it felt like that for us on this film, that we were doing something that was ours and then we'll see if anyone wants to show it."

Gervais recently finished work on Cemetery Junction, which he wrote, directed and produced with Merchant and is due out next year.

He also starred in it. But ask him whether he prefers being director, actor or writer and he's quick to respond.

"The reason I ever started being in stuff or producing it or directing it was to protect the writing. I see the writing as the DNA and all the rest is bringing up the kid."

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## Heroes showing their mettle with gruelling tour of the UK

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

PUNK/pop urchins Underground Heroes will be rocking Wales tonight in Cardiff – their fifth date on a gruelling UK tour.

The Medway quartet's 21-date tour began in Hitchin on Saturday and has already had stop-offs in Portsmouth, Bristol and Southampton.

The Heroes will head to The Garage in London this Saturday before heading north – going all the way up to Glasgow and back.

And their tour comes to a close at Ashford School, Ashford, on Sunday, October 25. That's 21 dates in 23 days.

Now I'm by no means an old man, but I'd struggle to remember my own name after such a gig-packed UK tour, let alone the words and chords to dozens of three-minute punk/pop masterpieces.

### Reminiscent

Credit where it's due, the band's commitment to touring and getting their music out there to the masses in such places as Stoke (Sunday night), Doncaster (Thursday) and Crewe (Friday 23) is unsurpassed.

Which is probably half the reason the Underground Heroes are one of the best-known and best-loved emerging unsigned bands in the country and I'm, tragically, not.

That and the fact that the four-piece – made up of brothers Aaron and Joe Dollimore, George Penfold and Jak Miller – are incredibly talented at what they do.

If fast-paced, dangerously catchy yoof rock is what gets you leaping out of your skinny jeans then the Heroes are the band for you.



**HARD GRAFT:** Medway's Underground Heroes have embarked on a 21-date tour in 23 days, which ends in Ashford

The double vocals – reminiscent of a younger, more angry/drunk pre-break up Libertines Carl Barat and Pete Doherty – work perfectly and the entire band's on-stage enthusiasm is infectious.

It's surely only a matter of time before the

band replaces Derby (Wednesday), Blackburn (Friday) and Dundee (Saturday 17) with bigger venues.

### TOUR DATES

- London Garage – Saturday, October 10
- Ashford School – Sunday, October 25

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**IN PIECES:** Canterbury-based rockers Amber Room perform Better Broken



**HEAVY-HEARTED:** Grunge outfit Kingskin play their track Stoner Girl



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- 1 We Are Tides – Nothing Changes (from Canterbury)
- 2 Directions – Stop Drop and Roll (from Maidstone)
- 3 We Are Tides – White Eyes (from Canterbury)
- 4 Facades – Ghosts (from Canterbury)
- 5 Shelta – Beautiful Girl (from Bexley)

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## SWALE SHOPPING

### Author and Flanimal at Waterstone's this week

MEET best-selling children's author Darren Shan and a real-life Flanimal at Bluewater this Saturday.

Shan will be making his last-ever UK book signing appearance at Waterstone's on Saturday, to promote the tenth and final book in his hit Demonata series. He will be signing copies from 10.10am.

Also, to celebrate the release of Ricky Gervais's new book, Flanimals Pop-Up, a character from the book will be at the store between 11am-3pm on Friday.

### Pantiles is taking the continental approach

ENJOY a taste of Italy when The Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells is transformed into a continental-style boulevard.

Shoppers will discover a wide selection of both sweet and savoury foods at Italia in Piazza, which takes place from 9am-4pm on Saturday and 10am-4pm on Sunday. From Parma ham to extra long black and chilli pepper spaghetti, there will be something to please every palate.

For more information visit [www.thepantilesonline.co.uk](http://www.thepantilesonline.co.uk).

### New book a must-have for Kent's festival-goers

AS the heady days of summer become a distant memory, recapture the excitement with the Festival Annual 09.

Festival-goers have uploaded their photos with the result a 312-page book featuring snapshots from across the country, along with personal stories.

Ten per cent of profits from book sales will be donated to the Oxfam charity.

Priced at £25, the Festival Annual 09 is available from bookshops and online at [www.myspace.com/festivalannual](http://www.myspace.com/festivalannual).

### You can have Monopoly on a National Trust site

BECOME a member of the landed gentry by playing the new National Trust edition of Monopoly.

Players can buy their own stately home or stunning piece of countryside, with the game, which features 26 of the National Trust's most beautiful sites from across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Buy the game for £25 and help to fund the Trust's work. The game is available only from National Trust shops and online at [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/shop](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/shop).

### Body Shop Nutriganics keeping wrinkles at bay

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## YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY TOM BETTS

### LIVE FROM STUDIO FIVE

Five, 6.30pm, week nights

HAVE you seen Live from Studio Five?

If the answer to that is 'yes', then you may, like me, be dead.

I blew my brains out with a shotgun during the second commercial break of the second show I endured.

I'm writing this from the spirit world, sitting on a cloud next to Kurt Cobain, who decided to kill himself as he had seen it coming in the future.

It was grunge rock's first pre-emptive suicide.

OK, I'm not really dead, but anyone who has tuned into this shambolic mess may well have the feeling that life just wasn't worth bothering with any more.

Presenting are three dimwits who may be hard pushed to tie their own shoelaces, in this case ex-footballer Ian Wright, Melinda Messenger and the blonde, prettyish, smiley one from the last series of The Apprentice, Kate Walsh.

These three, who shouldn't be allowed within 300 yards of a sweetshop, let alone on camera to debate current affairs, are allowed to share their insight into the day's news talking points.

And that's bad when there are serious things going on.

After being briefed on the day's current-affairs media output – seemingly about five minutes before the credits roll – the trio of nitwits are let loose on live TV to trundle through their badly-formed opinions.

They offer nothing to any debate... nothing at all.

Interspersed with all this are snippets of celebrity gossip and inane interviews with middle-of-the-road entertainers.



**MINDLESS:** Ian Wright, Melinda Messenger and Kate Walsh (right) should be switched off

Truly moronic comments abound. One recent classic was from Kate.

After a screening of Cheryl Cole's new solo video, she, without any sense of irony, asked: "Where are the rest of Girls Aloud?" in a Brummie accent that would shatter bulletproof glass.

Well, that's kind of the point of a solo project, Kate, you do it on your own!

The format itself is tried and tested – Matthew Wright has trod this path for years in the mornings, but at least he can read an autocue or stop himself from bouncing up and down in his chair for more than four seconds, unlike Ian Wright who may have an ant infestation in his underpants.

It won't be long until this is axed, so, if you can hack it, I beg you to take a look and witness the awfulness for yourself before it leaves us forever.

## YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



**AQUARIUS** (Jan 21-Feb 19)

ERRANDS are catching up with you. You've got to tie up the loose ends you've left straggling. It's much easier to find things when you're not surrounded by clutter all the time. Besides, you'll never know when somebody will drop in unexpectedly. Being a good host will fill you with pride.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762

**PISCES** (Feb 20-Mar 20)

A CHEQUE you've been waiting for could finally arrive. Use it to buy something fabulous to help you escape from mundane routines. Don't feel guilty about treating yourself. Normally, you spend your hard-earned money on your nearest and dearest.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763

**ARIES** (Mar 21-Apr 20)

YOU'VE been feeling pretty neglected recently. Fortunately, friends are around with all the tender loving care you might need. Normally, you find all this a bit annoying, but now you'll be grateful for it. Try to be reliable at work, or you could make some enemies.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752

**TAURUS** (Apr 21-May 21)

BALANCING your personal and private life is important. If you feel burned out see your boss about taking a break. You may be surprised at how generous they are about giving you time off. Don't neglect a youngster because of your social life. You have of commitments now.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753

**GEMINI** (May 22-Jun 22)

FRIENDS are urging you to expand your horizons. Don't be surprised if one of them asks you to go with them on a trip or gives you some unasked for advice. Stress at work could be affecting your personal life. It's possible you've outgrown this job. Look around for a new position.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754

**CANCER** (Jun 23-Jul 23)

THIS is a great time to apply for a promotion or high-profile job. Climbing the ladder of success will be effortless. The perks of the new job will be significant. A snooty professional could turn up their nose at your amateur efforts. Don't let them spoil your favourite hobby.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755

**LEO** (Jul 24-Aug 23)

YOU'RE tired of the predictability of life. Going on a long trip is just what the doctor ordered. Fortunately, a business or romantic partner has got some spare cash and they'll be happy to share the fun with you. Take this chance to explore a country that has always fascinated you.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756

**VIRGO** (Aug 24-Sep 23)

YOU have a great opportunity to free yourself from debt. If your bills have spiralled out of control contact a financial expert – they can help you. The ability to retire early or pay cash for a house or car will cause your self-esteem to soar. A romance could be brewing.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757

**LIBRA** (Sep 24-Oct 23)

A CLOSE relationship reaches an important turning point. Getting engaged or married is a strong possibility. So is starting a family. Alternatively, you could decide to form a lucrative business partnership. If you need to buy or sell property, enlist the aid of a professional.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758

**SCORPIO** (Oct 24-Nov 22)

YOU could be rewarded for your diligence. If you've been looking for a job you could find one that will let you work from home. If you already have a position you may be given a pay rise. It's even possible your employer will move to a new office that cuts your commute in half.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov 23-Dec 21)

A LOVE affair has reached an exciting new phase, giving you a fresh outlook on life. In the past you were sceptical about people who claimed to have been transformed by amour. Now you've been converted. Spending more time together will only deepen your commitment.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760

**CAPRICORN** (Dec 22-Jan 20)

STICKING close to home will give you quiet pleasure. You have a golden opportunity to take time off and potter around the house. If you've been thinking about buying or selling property, a deal could come through this week. You'll get a lot more money than you bargained for.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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**what's inside****Page 4-5**

Why those small businesses who keep a close eye on their costs and spend wisely are more likely to survive these tough times

**Page 6-7**

With the tough trading conditions set to continue for some time, it is more important than ever for Kent companies to keep a close eye on their all-important cash flow

**Page 8**

With the delay in new pension rules, we discover why it's more important than ever to start pen-

sion contributions to safeguard your future

**Page 9**

With widespread job losses yet to really start in the public sector, finances for many households could be strained for months, even years, to come. Here's how to make savings...

**Pages 10**

Late payment of invoices is a serious problem for small businesses, so there may never have been a better time to adopt invoice finance as a way of maintaining your company's bank balance

**Page 12-13**

Discover why although evidence

of economic recovery remains patchy, small investors are turning their backs on poor savings rates and moving back into shares

**Page 14**

With an estimated one in four households choosing not to renew or cancelling their insurance premiums, industry experts believe many business owners, struggling in the current recession, will follow suit in a bid to cut costs. We explain why this is a gamble not to be taken

**Page 15**

For most of us, saving a few quid and doing our bit for the environment is sensible and worthy and, with electric cars auto-

matically exempt from tax, politicians and car makers are jumping on the electric bandwagon

**Page 16**

Against the current economic backdrop, buying a new car starts to make sense because dealers are desperate to sell and that means hefty discounts – far greater than you can earn from years of saving...

**Page 17**

After a few stutters and bangs, the Government's £2,000-a-go Scrappage incentive got off to a flying start

**Page 18**

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# Prudence will pay you dividends

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AS THE MPs' expenses row begins to fade from memory, business leaders should not forget the saga highlighted the importance of internal controls in an organisation, according to leading accountants and business advisers Horwath Clark Whitehill.

Mark Anderson, a partner at Horwath Clark Whitehill, which has offices in Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone, said businesses could learn valuable lessons from an affair that brought moats and duck houses into the national consciousness.

The need for a formal system of internal controls grows as the size of the business increases, and it becomes impossible for one person to have a handle on all facets of an organisation.

However, Mr Anderson argued that where controls are in place, they must be both effective and appropriate.

"The MPs' expenses scandal showed how damaging ineffective or inappropriate internal controls can be to an organisation's reputation," he cautioned.

"The reputation damage was magnified because this was taxpayers' money that was, in some cases, being squandered.

“But away from the scrutiny that comes with being a public body, there are other harmful effects that businesses should be aware of.

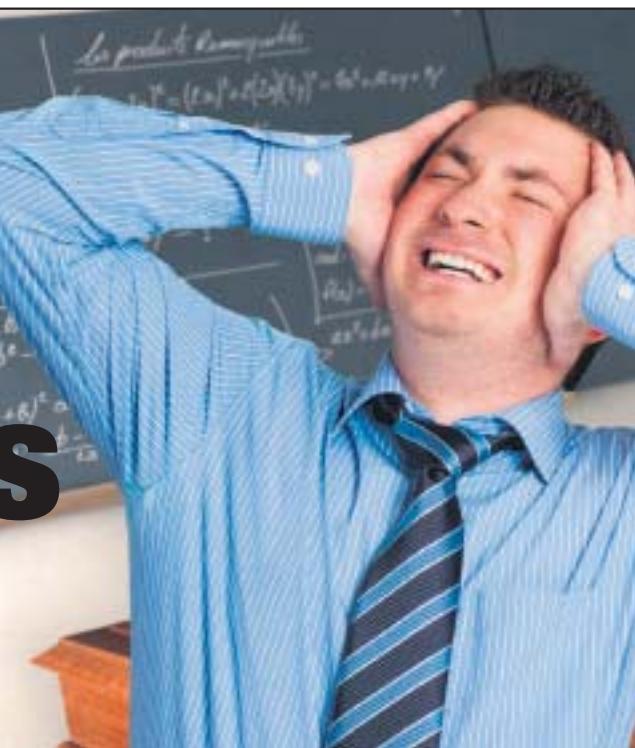
"Lost revenue, incurring additional expenditure, customer dissatisfaction and even prosecution are all possible consequences of control weaknesses.

"What the scandal has highlighted is the need to regularly review and monitor internal controls and systems, and not to just accept that 'this is how it has always been done'."

Firms need to re-assess the objective and purpose of such controls. Typically though they fall into one of three categories:

- Those that prevent the occurrence of negative events

# Don't ignore expenses lesson



- Those that detect negative events early so the consequences can be mitigated
- Those that react following a negative event to ensure that the organisation can recover immediately

Mr Anderson continued: "An organisation's internal systems should be structured to address each of these types of control. Incidences of fraud increase in challenging economic times; so reliable internal controls will be increasingly important."

will have greater significance.

be done either formally or informally by performing internal audits. It is also important to investigate all occurrences of systems malfunction as they will provide valuable data to explain the reason for the failure.”

The cost-effectiveness of procedures also needs to be considered, said Mr Anderson.

"There is little benefit implementing a detailed control if the cost of monitoring is greater than the cost of incurring the weakness.

"In each case, try to quantify the

consequence of a breach and use this to decide whether a detailed control procedure is necessary.

"Lessons can be learned from the public dissection of the expenses claimed by MPs. Businesses should not pass up the opportunity to ponder their own internal controls and

ascertain whether they are effective or need enhancing.

will ensure that they are relevant and meaningful.”

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# Go for prudent

WISE spending is simply about questioning every expenditure.

Some business owners are so engrossed in running their companies and chasing the next big sale, that they forget to focus on their finances.

It's like driving 100 miles per hour around the M25 with no destination in mind and not looking at the fuel gauge. In a recession every business needs to rethink all its costs as priorities change.

## Review your expenses

Keeping track of your costs can seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be a mammoth task – simply check bank statements regularly and make a note of what payments are due and when.

Remember to include taxes, National Insurance contributions, pension contributions and any licences you may need.

Although the 'tax man' has arguably been lenient over recent months by allowing payments to be delayed, he'll still want his money, and if the Treasury's coffers dwindle much further, it'll be a case of sooner rather than later.

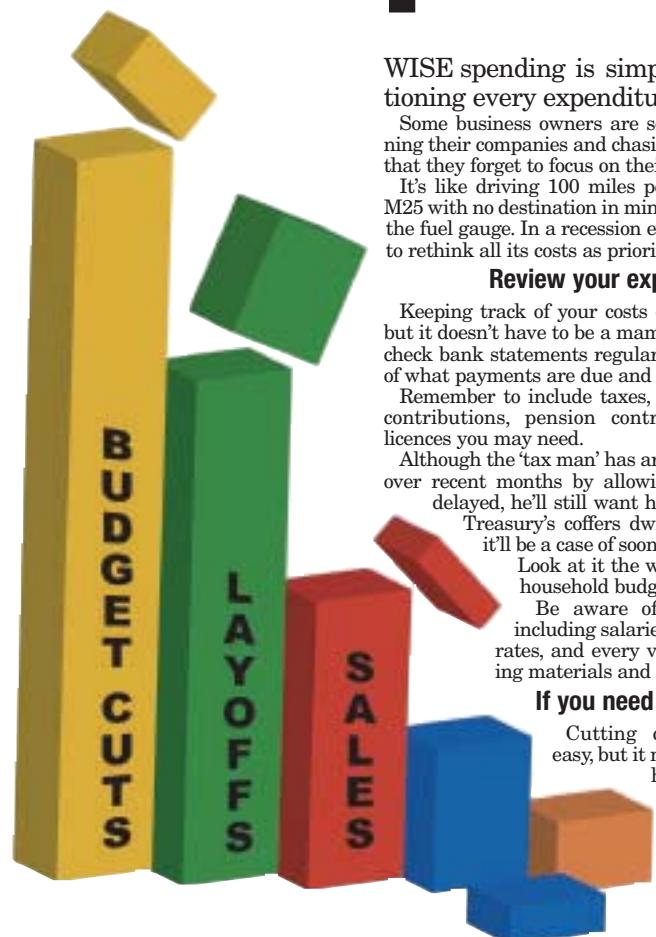
Look at it the way you look at your household budget.

Be aware of every fixed cost, including salaries, rent and business rates, and every variable cost, including materials and stationery.

## If you need to cut, prioritise

Cutting costs isn't always easy, but it might be essential to help get you through the recession.

However it is vital that cuts are made in the right places, so assess which areas your



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# pruning and not slash and burn

business can realistically afford to cut back on. Consider whether your labour force is too big, but increasingly businesses are thinking about reducing staff hours, job-sharing or offering a sabbatical before the ultimate sanction of making redundancies.

For 'one-man bands', vacating a premises and renting a serviced office for meetings and working from home may be an option, especially if you have the right IT in place.

When looking to shave costs, suppliers, including landlords, are more likely to be flexible if you let them know sooner rather than later and keep to the agreed payment terms.

## Monitor your returns

For every sale you make you need to assess whether it is worth it, as the true margin is sales, minus variable costs, minus the actual cost of collecting the cash.

The danger when work is tight is that businesses go chasing sales. If you are forced to do this, always make sure you've credit checked your new customer before agreeing terms.

You should also consider putting invoice



When faced with falling sales, reduced access to credit and squeezed profit margins, many small businesses find it hard going. However, **Andrew Metcalf**, vice chairman of the Institute of Directors Kent and director of Maxim, the Tunbridge Wells-based PR and marketing agency, believes those who keep a close eye on their costs and spend wisely are more likely to survive

finance in place, and at the very least make sure your credit control people keep an eye on customers who are slow to pay.

## Wisdom

When it comes to the costs you do control, such as PR and marketing, take time out to get a feel for whether the strategy is working.

Every hard-earned pound should be made to work very hard. If it's not delivering consider changing tack, taking advice and looking at what your competitors are doing.

Be careful not to cut costs in the wrong areas, however, as this could do more harm than good.

The received wisdom is don't cut your advertising or marketing costs altogether – as the people who have been best placed for the upturn are those who persisted with their marketing. I would say that wouldn't I? But it's true.

- To contact IoD Kent call 01732 849570, Andrew Metcalf can be contacted on 01892 513033.



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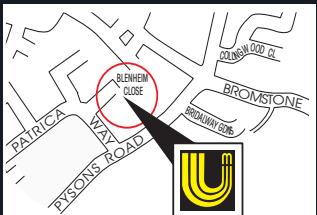


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## Essential guide to where you can save

- KOS is offering traditional barbecue grill and oven 'smoker bags' for £14.99
- SCG Construction in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off all building works
- Experience the natural comfort, warmth and luxury of a traditional feather mattress with the innovative mattress topper from only £39.99, save over 50 per cent. Various sizes available thanks to KOS offer
- Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £25 off removal of skin tags, moles, verrucas, warts, red veins, cysts and skin peels
- KOS is offering five Global knives set, scissors and block. Only £199.99, saving £150 off the RRP
- Village Hotel hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering 20 per cent off your bill at Starbucks café with a voucher; please note this offer is only valid at Village Hotel Maidstone – get your voucher from [www.vouchersforkent.co.uk](http://www.vouchersforkent.co.uk)
- KOS is offering a leather organiser handbag by Jane Shilton only £49.99 inc p&p, saving £40 off RRP
- Northgate Alfa motor dealer in Canterbury is offering fixed-price servicing for cars three years plus. Bronze Care Petrol or Diesel £109
- KOS is offering luxury Egyptian cotton 400-count percale bed linen. Save up to 40 per cent off RRP
- True Grip leisure activity centre in Canterbury is offering 15 minutes of karting, £10 on arrive and drive. Sundays only, 10am-2pm

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

# Don't let cash flow



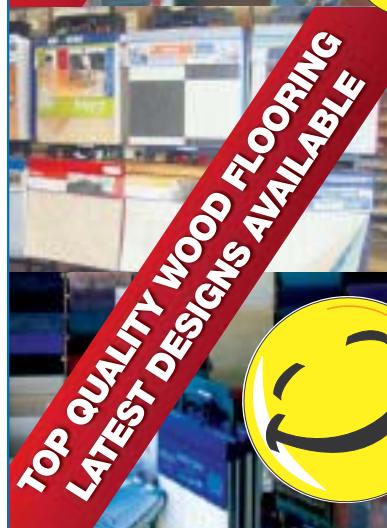
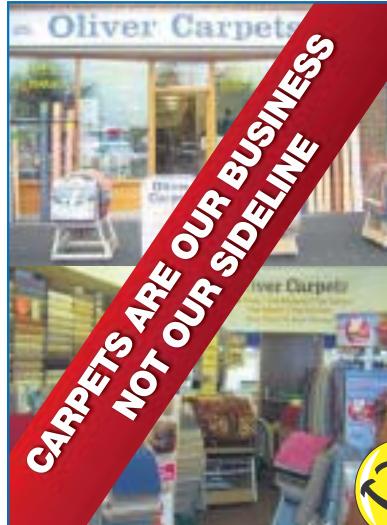
WITH tough trading conditions set to continue for some time, it is more important than ever for Kent companies to keep a close eye on their cash flow, according to Business Link.

Ian Netherton, Business Link business adviser, warns that poor cash flow is the biggest single killer of otherwise viable businesses.

"Even companies that have never had any problems with cash flow or credit control need to have systems in place," said Mr Netherton. "Otherwise the loss of a major customer or events over which they have no control – such as disruptions to the postal service or a major increase in cases of swine flu – can have serious knock-on effects."

Business Link recommends that companies should have at least some of the following credit control procedures in place:

- Carry out credit checks on new customers before supplying them with goods and services
- Be clear right from the start about your terms of business
- Make sure the goods and services delivered are as specified – so there's no excuse to query the invoice
- Send your invoice promptly and check it has arrived
- Keep an aged debtors ledger so you can see at a glance who owes how much and from when
- Two or three days before an invoice is due to be paid, phone to make sure



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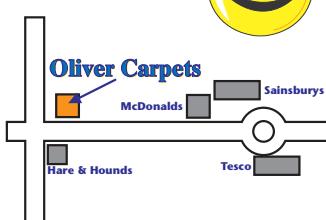
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# drain your business dry

that payment is set to be made

- As soon as payment is due, send a statement
- After a fortnight, telephone or send a letter – if necessary follow this with a visit
- Consider charging interest on the late sum – as allowed under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998
- Make use of technology – send invoices by email (they won't get lost or held up in the post) and ask for payment by BACS CHAPS to prevent the risks associated with bounced, missing or lost cheques
- Carry out monthly cash flow forecasts, more often during leaner periods.

Mr Netherton continued: "At this time of year, businesses need to pay particular attention to how their bank balance will be looking in coming months.

"Although good for people in sectors such as retail and leisure, Christmas can be bad news for many companies as poor weather, staff sickness and the extended holiday period can have a major impact on income.

"When this is combined with the bills that many companies face in January – such as corporation tax self-assessment payments – then it is no surprise that the first quarter of the calendar year is the peak period for company insolvencies."

If cash flow forecasts show that money is likely to be tight in coming months, Mr Netherton advises keeping your bank abreast of the situation and also considering options such as

factoring and invoice discounting.

He added: "Don't hide from financial problems – confront them and once you have a system in place it is relatively easy to keep on top of your debts.

"The benefits will include being able to reduce your borrowing, less stress and a more dependable supply of cash.

"And you will be at the front of the queue when your customer is paying his bills – because it is the businesses that chase for payment that get paid first."

"Business Link can offer support and advice on how to improve cash flow as part of a free, confidential Business Review.

"For businesses with four or more staff, this review is undertaken with the owner or manager by a Business Link adviser at a local venue or at the company's premises.

Subsequently, the adviser will prepare a plan summarising the practical actions agreed during the meeting.

Also included will be useful information and referrals to suitable organisations and services that will further help to improve the overall performance of the business.

For owner managed businesses with no more than two full-time staff, the Business Review is provided as part of a four hour workshop called 'Boost your sales and profits'.

The free workshops are available across Kent until December.

For more information about managing cash flow or to book a free Business Review, call 0845 600 9 006.



WARNING: Ian Netherton, Business Link business adviser

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# Sacrifice now for a better pension later

NEW pension rules that were due to come into force in 2012 requiring all employers to make pension contributions for their staff have been delayed by up to a further four years, depending on the size of the company.

**Steve Carpenter**, tax manager at Maidstone-based DSH Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors, explains below that starting pension contributions now is more important than ever.

The Personal Accounts savings scheme is designed to encourage those on low and middle incomes to save for their retirement. More than 10 million workers were set to be automatically enrolled in the pension from April, 2012, over an 18-month period.

## Contribution

The eventual target contribution is three per cent of the employee's salary. To encourage employees to contribute as well, their pension fund will receive a tax relief payment from the Government equivalent to 25 per cent of their contributions, which are targeted at four per cent of pay.

The Government has now admitted workers will have to wait to receive the full benefits of the scheme, with some facing a wait until October, 2016, before they can join.

As the new rules have been delayed, starting contributions now, in advance of the new rules, should lead to better pensions on retirement.

An opportunity to do this already exists by using salary sacrifice in agreement with their employer. These allow employees to work for a lower rate of pay in exchange for a pension benefit from their employer. This can leave you both better off.

Take a typical employee earning £30,000 per annum, for example, who makes personal pension contributions of £100 per month. The pension company can claim a tax credit of £300, making the total contribution to the pension £1,500 for the year. Their pay after tax will be £22,624, leaving £21,424 to spend after paying pension contributions. The cost to the employer is £33,108.

If the employer pays £1,500 to the pension plan instead, and the employee's pay is reduced to, say, £28,500, the employee will have an extra £165 to spend after deducting tax and national insurance, but with no pension contributions to make. In addition, the total costs to the employer fall by over £190.

So, instead of waiting for the Government to make provisions for your future, consider a salary sacrifice arrangement which can benefit both employers and employees.

• DSH Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors can be contacted on 01622 690666 or visit [www.dsh.co.uk](http://www.dsh.co.uk).



**FUTURE:** Steve Carpenter urges people to pay into a pension now

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# Crunch your spending

BY JEREMY GATES

TWO years into a credit crunch, it's easy to get carried away by the euphoria created by the booming stock market and widespread talk that recession is over.

At household level, the situation is more serious, with accountants KPMG predicting personal insolvencies will hit a record 150,000 plus in 2009.

Debt Relief Orders, enabling consumers with debts under £15,000 to escape bankruptcy, are 28 per cent up on 2008 levels.

With widespread job losses yet to really start in the public sector, finances for many households will be strained for months, even years, to come.

Here are some tips for slashing your costs:

## Cut energy bills

Households paying online and by direct debit now pay £284 per year less than those which get bills through the post and pay by other means – that's £978 against £1,262.

And the gap could top £300 soon, reckons Mark Todd at energyhelpline.com.

"It is no accident that the gap is widening so fast," he says. "Many people are coming off capped rates at the same time, so the energy suppliers – six majors and smaller players – are swooping like vultures to grab as many as they can."

"Unless you are vigilant and shop around, you won't get a good deal. It's as simple – and brutal – as that."

Todd says consumers may need only an email address to get the best deals. For EDF's



**SAVING:** More people are discovering the benefits of hunting for money-off coupons

Online 5 account, they can sign up on the internet and then ask for paper bills.

Around 40 per cent of consumers pay bills by direct debit, saving an average £98 per year.

## Save more with coupons

With profits at Morrisons surging 40 per cent on a promise of good value, supermarkets chasing market share are expanding own brand lines, including Waitrose Essentials, Tesco's Discounter range and Sainsbury's 'switch and save' campaign.

But canny shoppers can go one better by using vouchers to cut prices of many goods and services.

There's been a massive switch to vouchers and coupons in the past year.

Robin Goad, UK director at competitive intelligence service Hitwise, says: "People look online to research a product, looking at where

to find the best price, and finally doing a search to see if there is a voucher for it."

## Make savings count

Kevin Mountford of moneysupermarket.com claims savers have not suffered adversely in the banking crisis.

"Although interest rates are down from 5.25 per cent to 0.5 per cent, because savings rates have decreased by a lesser degree (and indeed are starting to rise again) savers get a better margin above base rate than this time last year," he says.

## Try to pay off debt

Although personal debt levels fell in August for the first time in 16 years, Danny Cox of Hargreaves Lansdown says this should be only a start.

"Reduce spending and use money saved to reduce personal debt first (credit cards, overdrafts, store cards, loans) and then your mortgage," he advises. "Hold a cash cushion to help meet unexpected bills or to cover expenditure if income reduces or falls."

## Hunt for the cheapest loans

"If you need to borrow to buy a new car, or a better secondhand one, a personal loan can be the cheapest option," says Nationwide's Chris Rhodes. "Packages offered by dealers can look attractive, but a special offer of zero per cent finance for the first year can move into a higher rate for the rest of the term and prove more expensive in the long run."

## Rent, don't buy

In August, rentals of DIY equipment surged 35 per cent, gardening equipment 28 per cent, and motorhomes 54 per cent, according to online rental marketplace erento.co.uk.

**Essential guide to where you can save**

■ Canterbury Hyundai motor dealer in Canterbury is offering £29.95 on MOTs while you wait

■ Village Hotel, hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering this deal: buy two large glasses of wine and get the rest of the bottle free at the Victory pub

■ Maidstone Kia motor dealer in Maidstone is offering a Lifeshine full car care for only £299

■ Oliver Carpets in Ramsgate, Herne Bay and Cliftonville is offering five per cent off when you spend over £250

■ Secure Style, windows, doors and conservatories in Herne Bay is offering 30 per cent off windows and doors

■ Lay Well flooring store in Sittingbourne is offering a free upgrade on underlay

■ Cliftonville tile centre in Cliftonville is offering free adhesive and grout on all tile orders over 15 metres

■ Decorators Choice, supplier of paints and wallpapers in Canterbury, is offering 15 per cent off all paints

■ Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £50 off skin lifting and tightening. Lines and wrinkle reduction treatment

■ Bourne Road motor dealer in Crayford is offering FREE car mats with all new Mazda purchases new and used

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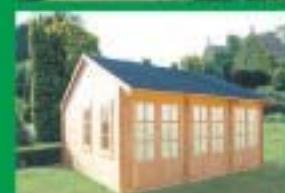
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## Essential guide to where you can save

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- KOS is offering Pulsar Kinetic watches for only £49.99 (inc p&p) no battery required, saving over 50 per cent on RRP
- The White House hair and beauty salon in Deal is offering a free 10-minute Kerastase treatment
- Maidstone Kia motor dealer in Maidstone is offering MOTs for £45
- KOS is offering Sun Blaster Glare Shields from £14.99
- FG Barnes motors in Maidstone is offering MOTs for only £39.99
- Bannatyne Health Club in Ashford is offering a brand new gym bag worth over £25 to all new members
- KOS is offering big button digital cordless phones for just £24.99, save £20
- SCG groundworks in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off all building works
- KOS is offering goose down surround pillows from only £24.99 inc p&p, save up to £125 on RRP
- Secure Style windows, doors and conservatories in Herne Bay is offering 30 per cent off fascias
- KOS is offering Snugfit mattress topper from slumberdown from only £69.99, save up to £40. Various sizes available

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

# Invoice finance is capital idea



ORGANISING CASH FLOW: Paul Saunders

A SALE isn't a sale until the money is in the bank, and with late payment of invoices a serious problem for small businesses, there may never have been a better time to adopt invoice finance as a way of maintaining your company's bank balance.

In times of economic difficulty small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) traditionally face cash-flow issues that are compounded by a tendency among their customer businesses to delay payments, usually because they face similar difficulties.

The Federation of Small Businesses recently confirmed companies have seen their usual 30-day wait for an invoice to be paid stretched out to 60 or even 120 days by their customers, many of which are large corporations and retailers.

These delays can prove catastrophic for otherwise viable businesses.

Invoice finance takes away this stress. Clydesdale Bank's invoice finance service enables businesses to obtain immediately up to 85 per cent of the value of invoices they issue, with the remainder payable when payment is received.

This means they always have rapid access to funds which reflect their commercial performance.

Paul Saunders, managing partner at Maidstone, explained: "Invoice finance is all about improving cash flow, which is a major issue for businesses as it leads to more companies failing than anything else."

You can have the best sales pipeline in the world but if you don't have cash coming in you won't be able to meet salary

payments or pay your key suppliers.

"Invoice finance works by bridging the gap between an invoice going out the door and payment coming in, which helps the company run smoothly. We fund the lion's share of the invoice value when it is raised, with our clients getting the rest when their customer pays."

Recognising the scale of the demand, Clydesdale Bank recently committed an extra £100 million to its invoice finance fund. The increased support for the local SME community is available through the bank's Financial Solutions Centres (FSC) in Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone.

"Invoice finance is fast replacing traditional overdrafts as the preferred way to borrow, and the certainty over cash flow it gives is even more important in the current climate. We responded to increased demand by earmarking an extra £100m for lending in this area and I'm pleased to say it's already making a real difference," said Mr Saunders.

### Shield

"As well as helping existing business customers of the bank, we are keen to see new, well-managed companies benefit from this new fund, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to supporting the SME community, which is the backbone of the economy."

Alongside invoice finance, Clydesdale Bank has also seen many clients opting to take up credit insurance to protect them from customers going bust. Every time a company fails there is a financial impact to all of their suppliers as well, and credit insurance helps to shield a business from this.

Local businesses interested in finding out more about invoice finance or other funding options, can call Clydesdale's business branches in Maidstone (01622 625400) or Tunbridge Wells (01892 617620).

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## Essential guide to where you can save

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■ KOS is offering personalised Weekender bags for only £29.99

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

# Investors return

By JEREMY GATES

ALTHOUGH evidence of economic recovery remains patchy, small investors are turning their backs on poor savings rates and moving back into shares.

Three new surveys all confirm that small investors have played their part in the bounce in London's FTSE-100 from 3,460 points in March to more than 5,000 now.

In total, they have over £150 billion in shares, against the peak of £283bn in 1999.

Virgin Money says 45 per cent of independent financial advisors think shares now provide the best return on clients' money, against only 29 per cent a year ago.

### Confident

"Cash is the big loser as investors have started to shirk the relative safety of cash in favour of capitalising on the long but consistent curve of recovery in the stock market," says spokesman Grant Bather.

This view is confirmed by Rebecca O'Keefe, head of investment at Interactive Investor, where online trades cost £10 each.

"Trading figures have returned to levels we have not seen since the peak of the dot.com bubble in 2001," she says.

"As the FTSE hovers around 5,000, investors clearly remain confident the market will continue to perform well. August saw record UK trading on our platform, with trading again dominated by big banks and companies involved in mineral production."

More than 140,000 small investors trade with Interactive Investor, and some have seen a 70 per cent jump in the value of their portfolios in 2009, often because they backed stricken banks.

Barclays is up seven-fold, while Royal Bank of Scotland has seen a five-fold rise.

A third survey, from Prudential, says share buying by small investors is rarely based on expert knowledge.

The Pru thinks more than 17 million small investors have held shares at some time over the past decade, and two-thirds of them (65 per cent) bought without any professional advice.

Mostly, they rely on internet searches or media reports when selecting shares to buy. Only 16 per cent are guided by a financial advisor, four per cent consult a stockbroker, while 10 per cent are guided by bank or building society staff.

"Not everybody is fortunate enough to have spare funds to save or invest, but many people do," says Trevor Cheal, Prudential retirement savings business director.

"It is staggering how few are seeking financial advice or looking to capitalise on the growth potential the stock market has historically offered."

Shares, therefore, may be driven by the 'herd instinct'. What happens next is anybody's guess.

"Those who have underestimated this rate of recovery have been hurt badly," says Jeremy Smith, head of UK equities for fund manager Neptune Investment Management.

"We believe that, with continued positive momentum, the FTSE-100 can reach 5,500 in short order."

But Derek Stuart, manager of the highly-rated Artemis UK Special Situations Fund, warns that markets have moved far beyond fundamentals.

With rising oil prices, rising unemployment and the biggest decline in US consumer credit since 1944, he wonders how long the rally can last.

Talk of resurgent shares poses a big dilemma for Britain's over-50s.

From October 6, they can invest a maximum £10,200 each in equity ISAs (Individual Savings Accounts) under new limits allowed by Chancellor Alistair Darling. The new limit applies to everybody else from April, 2010.

The ISA wrapper means all capital gains on shares is tax free. Dividend income is taxed at 10 per cent. For higher-rate taxpayers, the attractions are obvious.

But if markets lose their nerve, or Britain's economy enters the widely-feared 'double-dip recession', buying shares now could soon incur hefty losses.

In these uncertain times, here are the key rules for investors to follow:

- After London shares have risen so far fast, chances of further capital gains are inevitably reduced, in the short term at least.

With commentators predicting falls in the next 18 months, equity investment must be for a minimum five years, preferably for 10.

One of the most successful managed funds, Jupiter Financial Opportunities, has produced a total return of 815 per cent since its launch in June, 1997, a compound annual growth rate of 19.8 per cent.

Fund manager Philip Gibbs parked a big slice of his fund in cash through last year's turmoil, so his supporters are keen to see what he does next.

- Older investors, closer to retirement, need the protection of a widely-diversified portfolio to ensure their income stream is not slashed by the sort of market turmoil we saw in autumn 2008.

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## 2009 DAY TRIPS AND HOLIDAYS

### October

	ADULT
Sat 10th Calais & Cite Europe	£19.00
Tues 20th London Eye & Thames Cruise	£36.00
Thur 29th Boulogne & Nausicaa	£23.00
Sat 31st Halloween at Disneyland	£60.50

### November

	ADULT
Mon 2nd Afternoon Cite Europe	£13.00
Sat 7th Disney On Ice Princess Wishes	£41.00
Tues 10th Cherkley Court & Gardens Christmas Fair	£19.50
Wed 11th Ypres Battlefield Tour & Menin Gate	£35.00
Mon 16th Westfield Shopping Centre	£17.00
Thur 19th Boulogne	£23.00
Sat 21st Romford Market	£15.00
Wed 25th Bluewater or Lakeside	£16.50
Sat 28th Bruges Christmas Markets	£31.00
Sat 28th Birmingham Tattoo (2 Days 1 Night)	£97.00

### November (continued)

	ADULT
Mon 30th Warner's Bodelwyddan Castle	£295.00
Historic Hotel, Wales	
(5 Days 4 Nights)	
Mon 30th Maidstone & Newnham Court Shopping Village	£11.50

### December

	ADULT
Sat 5th Christmas at Heaven Farm & Batemans	£19.50
Sun 6th Frankfurt Christmas Markets	£34.00
Mon 7th Afternoon Cite Europe	£13.00
Wed 9th London Christmas Lights & Sights	£16.00
Sat 12th Thursford Christmas Spectacular	£58.00
Sat 12th Bruges Christmas Markets	£31.00
Sun 13th Lille Christmas Markets	£33.00
Sat 19th Christmas at Disneyland Paris	£60.50
Sun 20th Calais Christmas Markets	£19.50

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# for share of the action

"A portfolio should include equities, bond funds, cash and property, reflecting your own attitude to risk," says Ben Yearsley at IFA Hargreaves Lansdown.

- Make sure any equity investment is global, because Britain faces a turbulent 18 months while other parts of the world are likely to recover more quickly.

Yearsley, for instance, likes the Neptune Balanced Growth Fund, with nearly half invested in the UK, five per cent in Japan, five per cent in Russia and the rest spread around countries and sectors which look interesting.

## Drip feeding

Another well-regarded fund is First State Asia Pacific Leaders, a £2.9 billion fund invested in large and mid-cap companies in Asia Pacific, excluding Japan.

- In rockier economic times, steady income may be more important than capital growth – so look to invest in funds which invest in companies which pay good dividends.

- Look to drip-feed an investment, paying in perhaps £100 per month to a managed fund. It means if the share price falls, you get more units when share prices eventually recover.

"By drip-feeding funds into the market over the longer term, investors take advantage of pound cost averaging, buying in peaks and troughs but buying disproportionately more on dips," says Dr Stephen Barber, who advises Selftrade, an execution-only stockbroker.

Above all, whatever Prudential might suggest, the global economy is really too risky these days for investors to rely on rumours and online discussion boards. They really should check the views of professionals – fund managers and financial advisors – before they commit cash. The old days of easy profits on equities may be gone forever.



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# Cutting corners is a risky business

WITH an estimated one-in-four households choosing not to renew or cancelling their insurance premiums, industry experts believe many business owners, struggling in the current recession, will follow suit in a bid to cut costs.

However, Belmont International, one of the South East's largest independent insurance brokers, based near Sevenoaks, believes that companies can avoid putting themselves at risk by spending a little time examining what they actually need to ensure compliance with their legal obligations, commercial mortgages or leases, or what financial risk they can bear.

A recent survey of 2,000 households, undertaken by YouGov research on behalf of the Association of British Insurers (ABI), found that 22 per cent of households had cancelled their contents insurance and 17 per cent had ditched the compulsory buildings insurance in an effort to cut costs during the recession.

Belmont International has successfully helped many local businesses to reduce their premiums without the need for such drastic action resulting in lower costs and the all-important peace of mind.

## Jeopardise

David Armstrong, associate director at Belmont International, said: "Although many businesses may be struggling financially during the current recession, deciding to stop paying their premiums or renewing their buildings, business continuity insurance, to save money is a very risky game to play."

"Failure of the directors to adequately insure a business's activity or essential asset can seriously jeopardise the future of a business and in the case of liability insurance could leave business owners and directors exposed to prosecution and personal financial loss."

Commercial property insurance is important for most businesses, says Belmont International.

Not insuring a commercial property in terms

of its physical structure leaves a business financially exposed should there be a serious incident and may place them in breach of the terms of any mortgage agreement.

The cost of building insurance is determined by a combination of factors, including postcode, the size and type of the property, the insurer's view on the prevalence (or absence) of crime, flooding or subsidence in the area, as well as any attempts by the owner to improve the property's security and claims history.

Mr Armstrong continued: "The key is not to underinsure, so make sure you have a proper re-instatement valuation, plus inventory of stock and equipment.

"The tendency is to underestimate so as to minimise premiums and then regret it when the claim comes in.

"Many businesses may consider the risk of a fire to be low particularly if they have good security and fire protection thus reducing premiums, but retaining cover.

"There are a variety of things that company owners should consider when wishing to minimise costs without jeopardising their business, but only experts such as Belmont International will know what all of those risks and options are."

You can contact Belmont International on 01732 744700 or visit [www.belmontint.com](http://www.belmontint.com).

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# Think meaner, leaner and greener

CARMAKERS deserve credit for some leaner and meaner models in response to global warming, new legislation and volatile fuel prices.

It normally takes five to seven years to bring a new car to the market, so 'new generation' cars we all crave simply cannot happen overnight.

But manufacturers are understandably reluctant to sideline the internal combustion engine in favour of expensive research and development of new technologies.

Nevertheless, the Government is pressuring people into smaller and cleaner cars through new road tax bandings, ranging from zero to £400/year and set to become tougher.

Next year, gas guzzling limos or 4x4s face £950 road tax in the first year although anyone spending £50-100,000 surely won't blink at this 'paltry' sum.

For most of us though,

BY STEVE LOADER

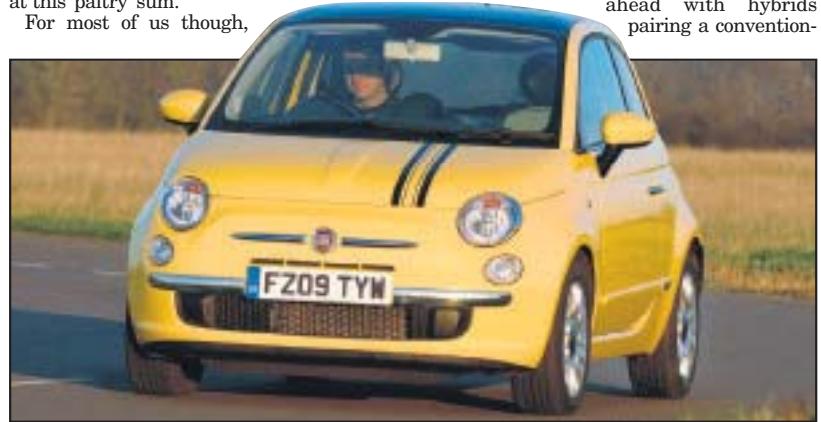
saving a few quid and doing our bit for the environment is sensible and worthy and, with electric cars automatically exempt from tax, politicians and carmakers are jumping on the electric bandwagon now.

There has been lots of publicity about 'pluggin' models for overnight charging at home or swanky city centre charging points.

But this is simply sweeping car emissions under the carpet or, more correctly, whisking them up the belching chimney of the nearest conventional power station.

Sure, moves are afoot to re-energise the nuclear generation industry, but we all have qualms about that and it won't happen overnight.

So, what are the other runners? Japanese giants Toyota and Honda have stormed ahead with hybrids pairing a convention-



al engine with electric power and batteries and Peugeot will follow soon, with other brands set to join the club, but hybrids are expensive.

And so we come back to the internal combustion 'lump' where emissions are plummeting, economy is soaring and refinement is improving.

In fact, things are moving so fast that you marvel at what a few well-applied kicks up the backside can achieve.

The downsizing phenomenon is also well under way, with several new cars proving that 'small is beautiful' such as Toyota's all-new IQ baby car, seating three adults and a child within a bodyshell barely longer than a two-seat Smart city car.

And Italy's Fiat has reversed its fortunes by looking to the past to design a Fiat 500 (pictured) for the 21st Century.

Most carmakers also now have an 'eco sub-brand' such as Vauxhall's ecoFLEX line-up and Kia's EcoDynamics, but they don't come cheap, so weigh potential long term savings against upfront cost – if you don't cover the miles, conventional alternatives may be a better bet.

Don't ignore petrol models either; the higher price of diesel cars and the fuel at the pumps must be compared with new small capacity low emission/consumption petrol engines such as the turbocharged 1.4-litre unit on the Fiat Grande Punto.

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### 3 The Government giving away money.

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\*Model shown is Picanto 1.0i 64495 On The Road (OTR) after deducting £2,000 Government and Kia Scrappage Incentive. Government Scrappage Incentive applies to cars or vans registered on or before 31 October 2009 only when traded in against new cars. Scrapped vehicles must have been registered to the purchaser for at least 12 months preceding the purchase of the vehicle and be MOT'd and taxed. Terms and conditions apply. Prices correct at time of going to press and specification is subject to change without notice. OTR price includes VAT, number plates, delivery, 12 months Government VED and vehicle first registration fee.

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# Buying – the new savings plan

BY STEVE LOADER

BRITAIN'S economy is limping towards recovery according to Government statistics released this week, but they also showed people are saving more despite weak interest rates.

And a stampede back to savings is the last thing the economy needs even if nobody needs a return to the profligacy that got us into this mess.

Against this backdrop though, buying a new car starts to make sense, because dealers are desperate to sell and that means hefty discounts – far greater than you can earn from years of saving.

Ah, you say, but a car costs thousands with or without discount. Yes, but most of us will buy one sooner or later

and you can make big savings after driving off the forecourt too by downsizing and opting for a model incurring lower road tax, fuel bills and other running costs.

If you have a car ten years old or older, you could save yourself £2,000 straight away with a grant from the Government-sponsored Scrappage scheme launched in May and renewed this week (see later story), but there have been hefty discounts available on most new cars for months now.

Even if, after raiding the bank account and waving your 'wad' at the dealer, your cash does not stretch to the discounted asking price, there are other deals that can be factored in, such as zero or low rate finance. A generous warranty up to seven years is also worth having.

And don't forget to ask for trimmings like a tank of fuel, car mats or discounts on any little add-ons you might fancy.

Do your homework though to ensure you are not buying a car on 'run-out', where production or importation ceased a while ago.

Choose the engine carefully too; with fuel prices volatile, you don't want to



MADE IN BRITAIN: There's a British bonus from buying the Nissan Qashqai (above) and Micra; and below left, the Kia cee'd SW family hatch and estate comes with seven-year warranty

trade one gas guzzler for another.

Buy wisely though and your new vehicle could save you a fortune, even on depreciation, though cars always devalue – unless they achieve classic status.

You can also afford to congratulate yourself for offloading something less efficient in favour of a modern and more eco-friendly model.

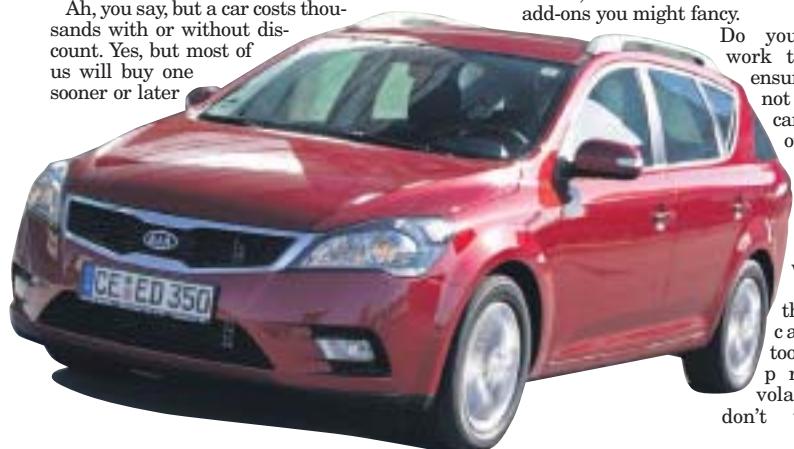
On the other hand, you might have lost tons on that big 4x4, but work out what it will cost you to run it for the next three years – it might be a lot less than the cost of chopping it for a new car.

Road tax also favours downsizing – gas guz-

zling executive models or 4x4s face £950 a year road tax from next year – but road tax is still a relatively small part of the motoring budget for most of us.

Many superminis sit in the lowest road tax band of £35 a year and though you might be tempted by tax-exempt diesel eco models, just check the price against a standard version of the same car. The eco supermini might save you £105 in road tax over three years, but you will pay more for the car upfront.

So, check out conventional equivalents and don't dismiss petrol power; that fuel is still cheaper and makes sense for lower mileage users.



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# Government's scrapheap banger takes on more fuel

BY STEVE LOADER

AFTER a few stutters and bangs, the Government's £2,000-a-go Scrappage incentive got off to a flying start, requiring a refuel at the Labour Party Conference.

The initial £300 million fund set aside by the Treasury was due to run out this month, instead of the expected cut-off date next March, but Business Secretary Lord Mandelson confirmed a top-up – enough to finance a further 100,000 deals on top of 200,000 already signed.

The offer is that the donor car or van going to the crusher must have been registered before 31 August 1999 and your name must have been on the V5 'logbook' for 12 months before the date your new car order is placed.

Carmakers have mostly embraced the deal after initial disappointment that they would be expected to foot half of each £2,000 Government Scrappage grant and noting the Treasury would claw back some money through VAT on each car sale.

Some brands have even put extra money on the table on top of their £1,000 per unit as well as extra specification and zero per cent finance – though this is no big deal when interest rates are so low.



**SALES BOOST:** Government-sponsored Scrappage grants have boosted sales of new superminis like the Hyundai i20 and Chevrolet Aveo

should get a hefty discount on most new cars in the current climate without needing a banger to scrap.

If you have been out of the car market for a while though, do your research; diesel cars now outsell petrol, but they cost more and the extra weight can be wearing and intrusive in the smaller cars most in demand now and you need to cover many miles to recover extra upfront outlay.

Meanwhile, petrol is making a comeback with lighter, small capacity turbocharged engines. You might also consider a hybrid, but these cost more and this must also be weighed against the mileage you intend to cover.

On the other hand, consumers with savings will know they are receiving precious little return and be tempted to seek a psychological boost from buying a new motor that should be cheaper to fuel and tax.

And don't be despondent if not in a position to take advantage of Scrappage; with the exception of city cars and superminis, you

## Essential guide to where you can save

- Bourne Road motor dealer in Crayford is offering free tank of fuel with all Mazda purchases new and used
- Robins and Day motor dealer in Maidstone is offering MOTs for £29.99 and a service and MOT from £119.99
- Motorline Renault motor dealer in Canterbury, Ashford and Maidstone is offering £99 service and free MOT for vehicles three years and older
- Truegrip off-road fun in Canterbury is offering 15 minutes of karting for only £10
- UK Stone stone merchant in Hersden near Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off Sandstone and limestone list price
- Robins and Day motor dealer in Rochester is offering MOTs for £29.99 and a service and MOT from £119.99
- Chambers Motorcycles in Maidstone is offering a free lock when you purchase a bike instore
- SCG groundworks in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off landscaping
- FG Barnes Motors in Maidstone is offering half price MOT with full service
- Bannatyne Health Club in Ashford is offering memberships from as little as £29 a month
- UK Stone stone merchants in Hersden nr Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off sandstone spheres

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# Smarter driving, better saving

BY STEVE LOADER

DOWNSIZING to a more fuel and tax efficient car should be just part of your master plan to cut the motoring budget.

The next stage involves smarter driving and journey planning and getting fitter by walking and cycling instead of using the car on short journeys – cold engines waste fuel and produce 60 per cent more emissions than warm ones.

Short car journeys also mean extra servicing and more engine wear.

If you must drive then follow these tips from the Institute of Advanced Motorists and RAC Foundation:

- Plan your route to save strain on car and driver. Take the most direct route – a sat nav can help – and go off peak if possible. Commuters should think about car sharing, Park and Ride bus schemes or other public transport.

- Have your vehicle serviced regularly.



**SENSIBLE SAVERS:** Downsizing saves money, but sensible driving can knock more off your motoring bill for a Skoda Roomster mini-MPV (above) or Renault Clio (right)

Neglected engines waste at least ten per cent more fuel and catalytic converters only clean emissions when properly maintained.

- Check tyres – under-inflated tyres need replacing more often (itself an environmental problem), are dangerous and waste fuel. Check pressures weekly.

- Obey speed limits to save money and stay legal. Feather the throttle as you reach cruising speed; 56mph uses 25 per cent less fuel than 70mph and a smoother driving style saves fuel.

- Accelerate briskly without racing the engine – pulling away too fast uses up to 60 per cent more fuel. Intelligent gear changes at modest engine speeds can save up to 15 per cent in fuel.

- Reduce drag – remove roof

racks and carriers when not in use and keep windows closed to avoid drag and wasted fuel. Remove unnecessary and heavy boot luggage and wide wheels and tyres that add rolling resistance. Air conditioning costs fuel too so try to use the fan and vents unassisted.

- Buy green fuel and use less. Look for low sulphur 'city' diesel or cleaner petrol (low sulphur/aromatics). Consider converting to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) – half the price of petrol and cleaner.

- Think ahead – there is no point rushing and then having to brake suddenly.

- Be a tank miser. Why fill the tank to the brim and burn more fuel carrying more weight than necessary?

- Stuck in traffic? Turn off the engine after two minutes to save fuel and emissions.

- For more eco tips see Julie Maddocks' online video report at: [www.yourkentv.co.uk/community](http://www.yourkentv.co.uk/community).



Essential guide to where you can save

■ Northgate Alfa motor dealer in Canterbury is offering fixed-price servicing for cars three years plus. Silver Care Petrol or Diesel £139

■ KOS is offering the Doro 338 GSM Big button mobile phone for £99.99

■ Village Hotel hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering free loaded nachos worth £5.95 when you buy a bucket of six Mexican Sol beers from the Victory pub

■ KOS is offering the Pulsar Military Style Chronograph Watch. Save £20. Offer price £49.99, RRP £69.99

■ FG Barnes motors in Maidstone is offering £250 of accessories with Network Q purchases

■ KOS is offering Peers Hardy leather handbag and free umbrella for £19.99

■ Robins and Day motor dealer in Canterbury is offering MOTs for £29.99 and service and MOT from £119.99

■ Truegrip off-road fun in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off a 4x4 off-road driving experience

■ KOS is offering solar powered bird baths. Save £30. Offer price £119.99 RRP, £149.99

■ Village Hotel hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering a free day pass when you call into village leisure club and exchange your voucher – available from [www.vouchersforkent.co.uk](http://www.vouchersforkent.co.uk)

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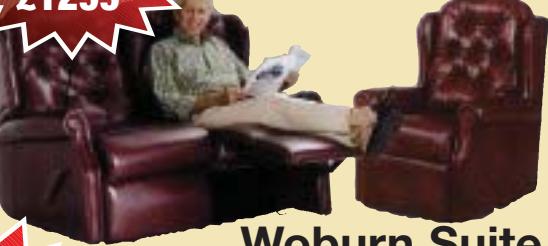
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# A road trip to assault the senses

■ BY ALEX FINER

AS he nonchalantly swerved out of the path of lorries coming over the brow of a hill on the wrong side of the dual carriageway, it was clear that our driver was key to surviving this 1,700-mile journey around Rajasthan.

Even travelling into town from the airport, Sonu manoeuvred the 4x4 Ford Endeavour carrying me, my wife and daughter around the cows – sacred animals to Hindus – that wandered all over the highway.

Defined by the colour of the houses, our Indian journey included the white city of Udaipur on Lake Pichola, the blue city of Jodhpur, golden Jaisalmer near the Pakistan border, via a safari camp at Osian to Rajasthan's pink capital of Jaipur.

There was also a side-trip to Agra for the Taj Mahal before the final leg to Delhi – no wonder I felt like I was in a road movie.

The soundtrack was one of horns – blaring from dilapidated buses, tractors, cars, scooters and auto-rickshaws. The noise was not a frustrated expression of road rage, but rather a co-operative venture in which each vehicle gave notice of its presence.

The Shiv Niwas hotel within the City Palace walls in Udaipur offered us welcome respite, and a tour illuminated the past glories of a royal lineage dating back to the 16th century.

The Mehrangarh Fort dominates the city with a bird's eye view of the cobweb of streets. Now a museum, it is full of artefacts from the Marwar dynasty, from lice combs to highly-prized miniature paintings.

Sonu expertly ferried us between markets and palaces and restaurants, and an optician



**COLOUR:** From the bright, busy streets, to the calm of the desert, there's beauty everywhere you look

where my wife's sunglasses were repaired with a smile and without charge.

All too soon, on we went across increasingly flat, sandy terrain to Jaisalmer. We stayed in the Mandir Palace hotel, built over centuries in elaborately-carved golden sandstone.

We bought cotton shirts and yoga trousers made to measure in three hours, haggled over a painted window-shutter, had an authentic oily Ayurvedic massage and enjoyed curries at the Trio restaurant with its view over the ramparts of the fort.

At Sam, further into the Thar Desert, we rode camels as the sun set and shadows lengthened over the sand-dunes.

Back on the road, we reached Jaipur, population 2.5 million.

Early the following morning, Sonu drove us to Dera Amer, where, like some colonial

Viceroy, I took a pre-breakfast ramble among cacti and parakeets atop a painted elephant.

I lost count of the number of dead dogs on the road to Agra, and the white chimneys of brick kilns flashing past began to resemble temple spires. It was hard, however, not to be impressed by the symmetry and perfect proportions of the Taj Mahal, even when viewed through a cold December fog. Its white marble had an ethereal, weightless appearance, as if it could float off at any moment.

As for Sonu, he was pale with the concentration of negotiating five lines of traffic squeezed into three by the time we finally reached Delhi.

Not even that final tortuous drive through New Year's Eve traffic seemed to ruffle him.

You'll find the roads of Rajasthan almost relaxing with Sonu as your driver, but tip well: he deserves it.

## FACT FILE: RAJASTHAN

Time difference	+4.5 hours (GMT)
Capital	Jaipur
Languages	Rajasthani and Hindi
Population	About 56.5 million
Currency	£1 = approx 77 Indian Rupees
Religion	mix, mainly Hindu

## Travel facts

• Alex Finer was a guest of Abercrombie & Kent, which offers the Essence of Rajasthan, a 15-day journey via Delhi, Jaipur, Nimaj, Osian, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Ranakpur, Devigarh and Mumbai, from £3,495 per person, including return flights, transfers, B&B accommodation, private car and driver, guide and admittance to all sites.

A&K is supporting the exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London from Saturday, October 10, entitled: Maharajah: the Splendour of India's Royal Courts. See [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk) for more details.

• A&K Reservations: 0845 618 2214 and [www.abercrombiekent.co.uk](http://www.abercrombiekent.co.uk).



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# Satisfaction comes from small lenders

PROPERTY owners are twice as happy with the service they get from small lenders as they are from big lenders, according to a new report.

And it is telephone and internet bank First Direct that emerges as offering the best service, with the highest customer satisfaction rating of 91 per cent, according to the report from consumer magazine Which? Money.

Overall rates of customer satisfaction were also up on last year.

In second place in the survey was One Account, which scored 77 per cent, with Coventry Building Society in third place with 75 per cent.

But consumers were least satisfied with Halifax, part of Lloyds Banking Group, which received only a 45 per cent satisfaction rating.

■ BY NICK AMES

Of the big lenders Nationwide came out the best. Other well known names such as Northern Rock, Abbey, Barclays and the Royal Bank of Scotland fared badly, with 47 per cent 50 per cent, 52 per cent and 53 per cent respectively. Yorkshire Building Society, which was second last year with 79 per cent, dropped seven places and came out with just a 61 per cent rating this year.

Overall, 85 per cent of Which? members surveyed said they were either very or fairly satisfied with the customer service they received from their lender the last time they contacted it.

They were most satisfied with the clarity of their mortgage statements and how well they are kept up to date with changes in interest rates and were least satisfied with how

well they are kept informed about better deals that may be available to them, with 27 per cent of those surveyed saying they are dissatisfied with this aspect.

Despite the economic upheavals and the crisis in the property market the overall level of satisfaction has increased from 58 per cent last year to 62 per cent this year.

"In general lenders have done better on all the aspects of service measured," said a spokesman for Which?

The Council of Mortgage Lenders said it is pleased people are more satisfied with their mortgage lender than they were a year ago.

"It is good news that our consumers are increasingly satisfied. Lenders have been working hard, under challenging conditions, to communicate effectively with their borrowers and treat them fairly. This shows these efforts are bearing fruit," said CML director general Michael Coogan.



ON THE UP: Customer satisfaction is increasing, leaving less of us screaming into our phones

## PROPERTY NEWS

### Belief in steady prices emphasises confidence

MORE than three quarters of consumers are confident that UK house prices won't fall any further this year.

That is the key finding of the latest consumer confidence survey from Rightmove and is in sharp contrast to the same survey carried out in January, which revealed that around two-thirds of people felt house prices would be lower in the following 12 months.

Rightmove say they feel that such a

u-turn in public sentiment provides a strong indication that confidence is returning to the UK housing market.

A series of recent reports have been equally optimistic as to the market's recovery, including Rightmove's own House Price Index which shows an increase in average prices so far this year, and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors re-adjusting its price forecasts.

Commercial director Miles Shipside said: "With increasingly positive public sentiment supported by encouraging recent market reports, the UK property industry is now seeing a virtuous circle of confidence building upon confidence.

"This has positive and negative connotations. The sentiment of future buyers is a pre-cursor to a speedier recovery in depressed transaction levels."

## Stamp on it to beat deadline

WITH the end of the stamp duty holiday looming, property experts Connells is expecting a surge of demand from purchasers who could save up to £1,750.

From December 31 the lowest stamp duty tax threshold will revert to £125,000.

"Add to this the fact that the chancellor has announced that VAT, currently at 15 per cent, will return to 17.5 per cent in January which will push up the price of furniture and appliances, and it makes a lot of sense to buy now," said Sean Connolly of Connells in Ashford.

But he said the problem is that there are simply not enough properties coming onto the market to meet demand.

In its latest House Price Index, Rightmove reports that 29 per cent more properties are

coming off the market than coming on.

Whilst this is not such good news for buyers, sellers can take advantage of both the lack of competition and the rush to beat the stamp duty deadline to get their sale done and dusted by the end of the year.

"We are working flat out to get our sellers' property onto the market and sold as soon as possible," said Mr Connolly. "We can't begin marketing a property until the Home Information Pack is in place, but our turnaround times are amongst the fastest in the country."

He added that if anyone is thinking of buying or selling a property worth between £125,000 and £175,000 they should take action now to be sure of meeting the stamp duty holiday deadline.

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# YOUR MOVE

This is our view of the current property market

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### MY EVERYTHING

Ashford based, bubbly and fun single mum, 23yr old, curly build, Brunette, I like reading and socialising, WLTM like minded male. Box 457472

### MATCH OF THE DAY!

Fun-to-be-with, blonde female, 25, 5ft2, a woman who loves football! Enjoys going out and staying in, looking for a like-minded man, to be her soulmate. Box 446494

### NOT YOUR

**BROWN-EYED GIRL, BUT...**  
Blue-eyed Brunette, 27, 5ft1, loves films, walking, darts, pool, singing, me time! Looking for honest guy with GSOH, to get to know. Box 880105

### IS ANYONE OUT THERE?

31yr old easygoing, independent female, WLTM cuddly fella to enjoy the finer things in life, with the usual! Seeking male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 438102

### GIVE AND TAKE IN LOVE

Loving loyal female, 30, blue eyes, brown hair, seeking LTR with male 30-35, 5ft+, no baggage, in the Maidstone area. Box 448471

### GOOD LUCK CHARM

Sporty female, 34, 5ft2, likes the gym, beach walks, Tennis and cycling, wltm similar male in his 30s for friendship in Eastbourne. Box 453712

### HORSES FOR COURSES...

Caring, loving, affectionate female, 30, 5ft2, blonde, likes walking, horse riding, animals, seeks affectionate male, 30-40, for lasting, loving relationship. Box 384013

### A FAIRYTALE ENDING!

Princess Fiona, 34, looking to meet her Shrek, 5ft8, short brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, large build, seeks romantic caring guy for friendship, maybe more! Box 877957

### FEAST YOUR EYES ON ME...

Hello I'm Andrea, 35, petite 5ft3, shoulder length curly hair. I enjoy eating out, cinema and I'm looking for friendship and possible long term relationship. Box 453039

### HAPPY DAYS!

Attractive, fun-loving female, 35, 5ft4", size 12, dark hair with blonde highlights, tactile, WLTM intelligent, professional, attractive guy, for a happy relationship. Tunbridge Wells. Box 308734

### SOUND GOOD?

Hello I'm 35, kind, caring and non-smoking, enjoy cooking, cinema, music, dining in and out, looking for that special someone to enjoy a relationship. Box 447959

### SEALED WITH A KISS

Petite lady, 36, long hair, blue eyes, single mum, enjoys holling, wining and dining, laughing, seeks loyal, loving man for friendship and more. Box 453079

### STARRY NIGHTS

Hello I'm Sarah, single mum from Kent, brown hair enjoy swimming, nights in looking for a caring man to share the best thing in life. Box 878378

### HISTORIC MEETING?

Mum of three, 36, long mousey hair, blue eyes, interested in historical places, music, eating out, seeks kind, caring, genuine male 36-49, non-smoker, for LTR. Box 440693

### GALLOP AHEAD!

Maidstone-based woman, 36, 5ft5, slim build, blue eyes. I'm caring, honest and have 4 children. I enjoy drives and horse riding, and WLTM honest, reliable man. Box 451311

### SOMETHING LASTING

Professional single male, 37, own home, looking for a man for friendship, hopefully a permanent relationship. Halisham Box 455221

### BE MINE

Honest and caring woman, 36, 5ft5, slim build, blue eyes. I'm caring, honest and have 4 children. I enjoy drives and horse riding. Maidstone. Box 456159

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## YOUNG-AT-HEART

Attractive 38 yr old female, dark brown hair, blue eyes, curly physique, likes days out, music, concerts, cinema, walking, cycling, seeks loving, fun make for friendship/relationship. Box 450348

## PERFECT MATCH

Hi I'm Nikki, 5ft7, brown hair, green eyes, enjoys animals especially my pets. Looking for a tall man who has a personality compatible with mine Box 453374

## A NICE BOTTLE OF WINE

Lovely, glossy Brunette, 39yr old, petite, bubbly and loving, enjoys ate, music and eating out, with a professional, loving and caring male for a relationship. Box 442551

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**RECIPE FOR ROMANCE**  
Single mother, recently separated, 41, 5ft9, slim, blonde/blue eyes. WLTM fun loving man with GSOH, someone honest and genuine. I love cooking, cycling, outdoors. Folkestone. Box 457913

### THE WIT TO WOO!

Kent female, 40, 5ft7, dark eyes, GSOH, no ties, likes cosy nights in, socialising, country pubs, cinema, seeks loyal, caring male, for friendship and more. Box 152862

### BETWEEN US

Asian lady, 41, single, no ties, outgoing, fun-loving, professional, looking for white male, genuine, professional and solvent. Box 451900

### FOR A RELATIONSHIP?

Shy but confident-once-known female, a mum, 40, likes socialising, tennis, walks, swimming, seeks gent with similar interests and hopeful love with. Box 428666

### WAITING FOR YOU

Curvy single mum, 38, 5ft7, romantic, loyal, loving and genuine, likes swimming, theatre, live meals, dining out, seeking a LTR with a like-minded male. Rochester Box 458566

### LOVE TO LOVE

Lovely female, 36, 5ft4, medium/large build, blonde hair, blue eyes, own house, loves walking, going out, the usual! Seeking male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 438102

### JOINED AT THE HIP

Sociable petite girl with great SOH, 40, blonde, sociable, love football! Looking for fun guy with great SOH for inseparable partnership. Box 884473

### STANDING OVER

Divorced lady, 45, young looking, blonde, 5ft6, I'm well travelled and have many interests. WLTM black or mixed race, loving man for LTR. Chatham. Box 459246

### SHIRKING FIRST

Understanding, caring female, 45, 5ft4, medium build, brown hair, likes swimming, animals, cinema, sports, the beach, socialising, travel, food, friendship, maybe more. Box 453832

### ACTIVE TYPE

Bubbly, happy, outgoing 41yr old female, enjoy life to the full, like writing, walking, watching DVDs, wltm like-minded, happy-go-lucky, clean male for friendship and more. Box 452016

### LOVE IS ALL AROUND

Easy-going, bubbly blonde, 42, blue eyes, hard-working, love outings, looking for a nice, genuine guy for relationship. Bromley Box 454517

### HELLO EVERYONE!

Single dog-owner, 42, fun-loving, kind and loyal, likes meat out, weekends away, country walks, WLTM a non-smoking guy to share it all with. Seaford Box 454566

### TALL ORDER

Curvy lady, 5ft9, 43yrs old, blonde hair/green eyes. I live in Kent in, I'm down-to-earth and like being out and about. Box 456020

### I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY

Christian female, 57, looking to meet a nice man with gsoh to go to the cinema and have fun with. St Leonards-on-Sea Box 449225

### HEART AND SOUL

Easy-going single mum, 46, 5ft4, size 12/14, likes bowling, gardening, swimming, looking for a man, 35-45, N/S, slim/medium build with similar interests. Maidstone Box 454176

### MY PRINCE?

Not-just-for-xmas dog lover, into sports, walks, motorbikes, GSOH, female, 47, pretty, long dark hair, looking for knight in shining armour! East Sussex area. Box 872961

### ARE YOU THE ONE FOR ME?

Caring, cute female, 46, petite, likes socialising, dancing, travelling, good food, seeking intelligent, loyal man 42-52 for love and TLC. Seaford. Box 443366

### BE MY FRIEND AND LOVER

Bubbly, caring lady, 47, divorced with 2 teenagers, dark hair, medium build, into cooking, driving, love to talk, laugh and have fun, seeking a normal guy Box 429592

### ARE YOU LOVING & CARING?

Young 48 year old, loving, caring, very bubbly, 5ft6, medium build, blonde eyes, likes clubs, cinema, eating out, cosy nights, good company Box 434089

### JUST IMAGINE

Petite, blonde, bubbly, friendly, easygoing single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things, WLTM genuine male, to see where life takes us! Box 893562

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**CARING & PROFESSIONAL**  
Attractive, curvy single, 44, kind, genuine, loyal and loving, seeking a man with similar qualities to share my life with. St Leonards-on-Sea Box 457913

### SWEET AS HONEY

Petite, slim, blonde/blue eyes, 51yr old woman, 5ft, GSOH, no ties, likes cosy nights in, socialising, country pubs, cinema, seeks loyal, caring male, for friendship and more. Box 25-50 Brighton Box 454868

### NOTHING VENTURED...

Hi there, I'm a Sussex based, 51yr old woman, I love eating out, historical sites etc. Looking for kind gent for friendship, evenings out, maybe more. Box 451981

### LOVELY BUBBLY

Short 51yr old professional lady, likes history, films and reading, seeking a genuine, gentle, 45-55, with gsoh to enjoy evenings out, stimulating conversations and fun. Box 453211

### BRING ME TO LIFE

Light-hearted female, 52, 5ft2, medium build, loves walking, socialising, swimming, holidays, looking for friendship maybe more. Box 443832

### COMPANIONSHIP, LAUGH-TER, HOPEFULLY MORE

Curvy female, 53, 5ft1, medium build, loves walking, socialising, swimming, cinema, music, swimming, WLTM similar loving male. Box 443642

### GREETINGS!

Curvy lady, 53, 5ft1, medium build, loves walking, socialising, swimming, cinema, music, swimming, WLTM similar loving male. Box 443642

### FUN TIMES GUARANTEED

Caring guy, 26, from Bexhill, 5ft4, likes the outdoors, going clubbing, meeting up with mates, WLTM a funny decent girl to share life with. Box 450585

### SMART MOVE

Spontaneous, friendly, lively female, 55, likes cinema, walking, cooking, socialising, seeks similar person for friendship leading to hopefully more. Box 873039

### I'VE GOT THE GOLDEN TICKET

Christian female, 57, looking to meet a nice man with gsoh to go to the cinema and have fun with. St Leonards-on-Sea Box 449225

### MUSIC TO MY EARS

Hi there I'm 35, 6ft1, dark hair and blue eyes, loves music and playing guitar, seeks female who's passionate, tactile, to share friendship/relationship. Kent. Box 458115

### HOLDING OUT FOR A HERO

Londoner new to the area, 57, 5ft5, slim, attractive blonde, seeking a man for a serious relationship and lasting happiness. Box 445857

### PISCES OR CAPRICORN?

Star-sign lady, 59, 5ft3, medium build, blue eyes, likes swimming, holidays, the sea; WLTM tall man with good heart for love. Box 442480

### BE A FRIEND TO GIVE

Easy-going lady, 59, 5ft3, medium build, blue eyes, loves music, dancing, walking and holidays abroad, looking for a like-minded male for friendship, maybe a LTR. Box 452897

### LOTS OF TLC TO GIVE

Happy-go-lucky lady, 63, 5ft3, medium build, brown hair, blue eyes, likes dancing, walking and holidays abroad, looking for a like-minded male for friendship, maybe a LTR. Box 452897

### BE A FLIRT...

Down-2-earth male, 37, looking for blonde, attractive female, 18-40, for a lasting relationship. Sittingbourne Box 459297

### JUST IMAGINE

Petite, blonde, bubbly, friendly, easygoing single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things, WLTM genuine male for friendship, maybe more. Box 453105

### SHINE ON

Generous and loving man, 37, seeking a very slim and petite, 18-40, with blonde hair and blue eyes. Box 459293

### LOOKING FOR PRINCE CHARMING

Pretty, bubbly girl in her 60s love romantic meals, gardens, and the arts looking for caring gentleman. East Sussex. Box 458169

### WALKS ALONG THE COAST

Relaxed, easygoing, 37, looking for a blonde, attractive female, 18-40, for a lasting relationship. Sittingbourne Box 459297

### NEVER TAKE LIFE TOO SERIOUSLY

Fun loving person, 48, 5ft10, short brown hair, blue eyes, many interests, looking to meet a genuine lady for road to romance. Ashford. Box 459145

### SHARE THE GOOD LIFE

Professional male, 45, own home/cars, likes cinemas, weekends away, the coast, a BBQ and good wine, looking for friendship, more. Box 426202

### LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN

Hard-working, slim man, 53, 5ft8, honest, romantic, with a gsoh, looking for a non-smoking, caring lady, 45-60. Box 459036

### GET TOGETHER

Professional man, care manager, active social life, 55, looking for a similar lady in Eastbourne. Box 458990

### THE FIRST KISS

Liverpudian male, 43, loves football, works for the NHS, loves fun, going to movies, seeking female to share a date with, more. Box 446633

### GAME ON

Male, 44, 6ft tall, fairily sporty, romantic nature, likes the countryside, coast, going out; seeks outgoing confident female for friendship/possibly relationship. Medway/Kent. Box 870699

### COSY NIGHTS

Male, 45, divorced, 2 sons grown up. I'm slim build, with brown hair/eyes. I like walks, socialising, meat out etc. Hastings. WLTM genuine lady. Box 458979

### THE REAL THING

Phil Mitchell lookalike, 44, 5ft5/blue eyes

## MOTORS NEWS



### Little Smart special is just height of fashion

SMART has launched this special 'Edition Highstyle' with loads of luxury features to complement a trendy chocolate brown/metallic finish.

Available solely as a coupé and building on the two-seat city car's flagship Passion specification, only 215 are available for the UK, priced from £10,900.

Features include 12-spoke, 15-inch alloys, matt silver interior details and leather; heated leather metallic silver seats; upper and lower dashboards; three-spoke steering wheel and gearknob.



### Scrap and escape in a cheaper VW Campervan

LONG seen as a producer of archetypal campervans, VW may have opened a rich seam of new business.

Noting the Government's decision to extend £2,000 Scrappage discounts, it has launched a package allowing owners to scrap a 10+ year-old 'banger' and take off on their travels for three years in an 'all mod cons' VW Caravelle California camper (pictured). It costs as little as £315 a month on a personal contract purchase deal – while stocks last ahead of a new-look California launched in January.



### Magazine finding Nemo is the most economical

NEVER mind controversial 'official' fuel consumption figures, the Citroën Nemo has publicly proved itself the UK's most miserly van.

A Nemo SensoDrive 1.4HDi returned an impressive 75.8 mpg in an independent MPG Marathon organised by Fleet World magazine over a 358.5 mile event to retain its 'Britain's Most Economical Van' title.

The Nemo's economy was attributed to its quick-shifting SensoDrive automated manual gearbox.



A SPORTY LITTLE NUMBER: Alfa's racy three-door MiTo is an ideal 'downsizer' to replace a sporting gaz-guzzler and with £2,000 scrappage discount can cost only £8,995

# Alfa's sporting chance to downsize with the MiTo

ALFA Romeo reckons many Jaguar and BMW owners are using the Government-sponsored Scrappage scheme to junk their 'bangers' for a £2,000 discount on a new Alfa MiTo.

It isn't stretching belief either, for the racy three-door MiTo is an ideal 'downsizer' to replace a sporting gas-guzzler and, with two grand scrappage discount, prices start from just £8,995.

Mark Stevens, dealer principal at Lipscomb at Aylesford, Maidstone, said: "Drivers of big cars choosing to downsize don't feel short-changed with the Alfa MiTo."

The Alfa is also more affordable than the BMW Mini cult car and doesn't need expensive customising to turn heads.

When I see a MiTo in the right colour – they look anything from ordinary to dreadful in colours other than red, black and yellow – I wonder how Alfa crammed so many curves into such a short car. It helps justify the posh half of the car's name though, an abbreviated

## ROAD TEST

### ALFA MiTo

■ BY STEVE LOADER

#### STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

pairing of Italy's fashion capital Milano and resurgent motor city of Torino.

The feel of the MiTo also matches its style. It's not perfect, but it is great fun and selectable 'DNA' drive settings – Dynamic, Normal and All-Weather – deliver three cars in one.

The default for keen drivers will be Dynamic, which weights up the steering throttle/engine response; Normal does what it says on the tin; and All-Weather is an option all cars should have.

However, powertrain choice is crucial. Our test car had the 1.6-litre diesel option – a bit like asking a prop forward to ride a racehorse in heavy going. Diesels just don't make the most of the MiTo's nimble grace and style. It was reassuring that the free-revving 1.4-litre petrol models – turbocharged and unblown – have grabbed more than 90 per cent of Lipscomb's MiTo sales since launch earlier this year.

Do we need to talk about the cabin on a car this stylish? Only to say it looks as classy as the exterior, but also works well.

I don't think anyone should have to pay for the convenience of split folding rear seats though, and it can feel a little claustrophobic in the back, particularly for kids.



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# USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

## RANGE ROVER



AGEING petrol examples of Range Rovers are ridiculously cheap now, but just a few fill-ups at the pumps could see you spending the same amount all over again. Then again, a used RR delivers cut-price entry to an upper-crust view of the road and loads of kit and comfort for your money. Go for the highest spec you can afford though, preferably Vogue flagship level, to claw back most luxury to balance the car's extreme thirst and flaky reliability.

### STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

## BIG 4x4s

WINTER is coming and people who really do need rugged 4x4 grip or towing capacity will be turning their thoughts to tougher weather conditions. Fortunately for them the recession, volatile fuel prices and road taxes have pole-axed used values for big and luxurious go-anywhere models like those here. Petrol models are particularly good value and can make it worthwhile to have a £1,500-£2,000 conversion to run on LPG (liquid petroleum gas) - LPG is half the price of petrol. If you cover few miles, the argument stacks up even better.

## BMW X5



FOR many, the X5 is the ultimate SUV (sports utility vehicle). It's big, laden with badge cachet, drives like a BMW despite a high body and looks the business; all good reasons for desirability and why this 4x4 holds its value better than most, though it still cannot defy erosion by running costs'. The diesels are the favourite buy, but you could save lots with a performance petrol model, especially as diesel is still significantly dearer than its rival.

### STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

## TOYOTA LANDCRUISER



IF you need a 4x4 to tow a trailer, boat or a caravan then the Landcruiser is one of the best, living up to rugged looks and helping it to defer the worst depreciation. As with the Range Rover, go for the best spec to make the most of its thirst for fuel, but do not worry about big repair bills; providing your Landcruiser has not been abused or missed services, major problems should not trouble your horizons.

### STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

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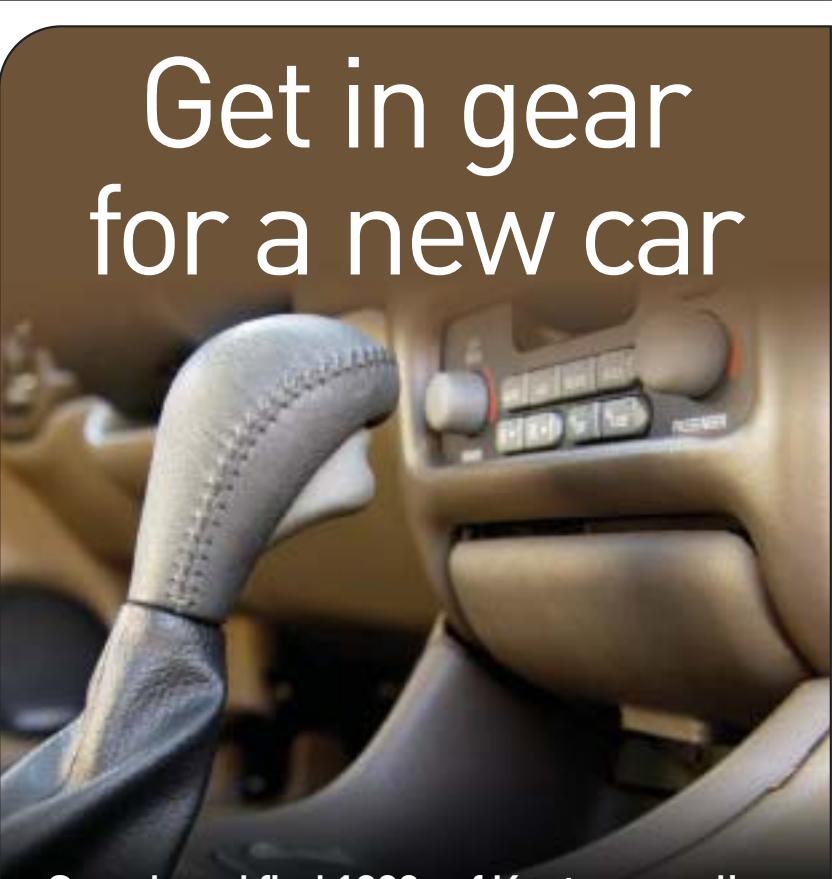
**Ufton Lane, Sittingbourne ME10 1JB**

Tel: 01795 423615 email: [burgessfiat@btconnect.com](mailto:burgessfiat@btconnect.com)

Fuel consumption figures for the Fiat 500 1.2 Pop mpg (l/100km) and CO2 emissions: Urban 44.1 (6.4) Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) Combined 55.4 (5.1), CO2 119 g/km.

What it cost to drive your chosen Fiat 500 1.2 Pop, based on 12,000 miles per year, subject to the available road tax, based on a 50/50 split between urban and extra urban driving. Excludes cost of the first 12 months of road tax. Offers subject to availability. It is recommended to read the full terms and conditions before you apply. Offers valid until 31st March 2010. Offers may be withdrawn at any time.

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- CUSTOMER SERVICE, CALL CENTRE
- DOMESTIC
- EDUCATION, TEACHER, SCHOOL
- ENGINEERING, MANUFACTURING, UTILITIES
- ESTATE AGENCY, PROPERTY

- GRADUATE, TRAINEES
- HEALTH AND SAFETY, SECURITY, DEFENCE
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- INDUSTRIAL, WAREHOUSE, FACTORY
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- INSURANCE, BANKING, FINANCE
- LEGAL
- LEISURE, TOURISM, TRAVEL
- MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY
- MANAGEMENT, SENIOR POSITIONS
- MARKETING, ADVERTISING

- MOTOR TRADE, DRIVER
- NOT FOR PROFIT, CHARITIES
- NURSING, MEDICINE, CARE WORK
- OTHER
- PRINT, PACKAGING, DISTRIBUTION
- PR, MEDIA, JOURNALISM
- PUBLIC SECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES
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Tel: 01474 533082 Fax: 01474 533844

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**Further details about all posts and application forms are available on our website [www.spiresacademy.com](http://www.spiresacademy.com) or alternatively contact Marion Wigington at [m.wigington@spiresacademy.com](mailto:m.wigington@spiresacademy.com)**

**Closing date for all posts: 12.00 noon, Friday 23rd October 2009.**

Spires Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to appropriate child protection screening including checks with previous employers and the Criminal Records Bureau.



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Closing date for applications: 12 October 2009

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Closing Date for applications: 12 October 2009



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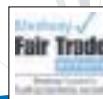
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AMBITION: Kelly Holmes at Kent School Games launch

# Kelly's hope to take Kent School Games national

## KENT SCHOOL GAMES

DAME Kelly Holmes says she is trying to encourage the rest of the country to follow in the footsteps of the successful Kent School Games, writes **Glenn Pearson**.

Kent's double Olympic gold medallist attended the launch of the 2010 Kent School Games last week, which is intended to give more than 30,000 young people across the county chance to compete in as many as 38 different sports.

The Games were launched at Hayesbrook Sports College in Tonbridge on Thursday with local heats set to start later this month, culminating in finals events in July next year.

Kent County Council leader Paul Carter, the man who came up with the idea for an event believed to be the biggest school sports event in Europe, talked of a continued decline of sport in schools over the last ten years and how that needed to be rectified.

After the success of the inaugural Games in 2008, Holmes said there have been discussions with other counties and the ideal scenario would be for a national school games to coincide with London 2012.

"It's a massive event," she said. "There's nothing like it in the UK and I'm pushing for this to be replicated in other counties so we can have a national final in a national school games."

"It's at quite an early stage, but in the nearby counties such as Essex and Surrey, they are very keen on the model, because the model is very good. Hopefully we can replicate it, but obviously it takes quite a lot of people to get something like this going. If we can start getting other counties doing it by 2011 with a big final for 2012, that would be fantastic."



SWIMMING STARS: Faversham Swimming Club

## SWIMMING

### Faversham club enjoy stroke of success at Gala

FAVERSHAM Swimming Club held their heads high after scooping fourth place in the Development Sprint Gala at Dover.

The club's 18 years and under relay team, including Tom Walton, Emily Westlake, Emma Wenn and Tom Aylen, wowed the crowd with some superb performances, earning them two first-placed finishes.

Faversham's swimmers collected a total of six speeding tickets (badges of honour) for exceeding the entry times as specified by the Amateur Swimming Association. Top speeders were Lydia Scott for under-50-metre breaststroke, Molly McKenna for the 25-metre individual medley, Casey Harte for the under-50-metre freestyle, Bridie Matthews in the under-50-metre breaststroke, Tom Guthrie in the under-50-metre breaststroke and Rebecca Crouch in the under-50-metre freestyle.

The Tesco Gala Star trophy was awarded to nine-year-old Keeley Wrench for competing in her first development gala and the Tesco Gala Shield was awarded to Tom Walton for his performance in the 18 years and under-50-metre freestyle race.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR SPORTS STORIES TO SPORTS EDITOR GLENN PEARSON AT**  
glenn.pearson@kosmedia.co.uk



UNLUCKY: Elie Kayeme came on as a substitute and caused Wingate &amp; Finchley plenty of problems, but Sittingbourne were unable to capitalise on the good chances they created

# Brickies miss a host of chances in trophy draw

## FOOTBALL

■ BY PETER PITTS

THE Brickies were forced to travel to north London last night for a replay after failing to finish Wingate & Finchley off at Bourne Park on Saturday.

Sittingbourne, who gave a debut to Maidstone and Ashford winger Jimmy Bottle, had the wind behind them in the first half and in the first ten minutes this looked to have given them the edge, but despite winning a number of early corners, they all came to nothing.

Wingate weathered the early pressure easily but Sittingbourne came good again in the final period of the half. On 39 minutes Nick Reeves, who is subject to a seven-day approach from Chatham Town, smashed the ball into the Wingate box where Femi Omogbehin instinctively stuck out a foot and the speed of the cross meant that the shot whistled past goalkeeper Gavin King.

The second half had barely begun but it was obvious that Sittingbourne hadn't adjusted to playing with the strong wind blowing at them. Skipper Joe Dowley attempted to clear his lines but only managed to find a Wingate player. The ball sailed over Nick Reeves' head straight to the lurking Wingate captain Marvin Samuel

### Sittingbourne 1

Omobehin 39

### Wingate & Finchley 1

Samuel 47

### Sittingbourne starting XI



Subs used: Kayeme (Cottrell 57), Manners (Neal 57)

almost vertical and over the bar. It was a huge let off for Wingate but Sittingbourne kept up the pressure and a ball from Ashley Grant found Colin Richmond on the edge of the area only for a timely challenge to whip it off his foot and up-field.

Kayeme caused havoc in the Wingate defence again on 76 minutes when he fired in a blistering cross. This time the ball bounced off defenders and attackers alike and eventually was kicked off the line by Marc Weatherstone.

Wingate weren't finished though and only a brave header from Matt Bourne, who got in the way of Leon Fisher's shot, stopped Ibrahim from being called into action as both sides were forced to settle for a replay.

# Buster bags a brace to set up Vase tie in Surrey

## FOOTBALL

■ BY GLENN PEARSON

### Wick 1

Boston 63 (pen)

### Faversham Town 2

Smissen 21, 37

A BUSTER Smissen brace saw off Wick at the weekend and set up a trip to Surrey to face Badshot Lea in the FA Vase second round proper.

The prolific striker netted twice in the first half before having to go off at the start of the second half with what can only be described as a sore backside.

He is expected to shrug that off in time for Saturday's trip to Corinthian, but defender Dan Larkin is unlikely to feature after suffering heavy bruising to his foot.

Manager Justin Luchford, speaking to Yoursawale from a beach in Majorca, will go down to watch Badshot Lea ahead of their fixture next month. The Town boss, who returns from his holiday in time for training on Thursday night, is targeting a long run in the FA Vase.

"We have got to try and go as far as we can because it is against teams at our level and there is also £1,000 on offer for each round," he



ON TARGET: Town (white) celebrate Smissen's strike

said. "I'm not saying we are going to go all the way, but it's a competition that sits nicely in our fixture list."

Wick lost one of their influential strikers in the first half on Saturday due to injury, and Luchford points to that as a crucial moment.

"They lost their striker after 25 minutes and I really felt that was the turning point in the game," he said. "I have watched him play and he is a decent player. We gave a soft penalty away in the second half and we really had to hand in there for the last 35 minutes, but we did okay and I think it was a fantastic result against a team flying in their league."

Luchford takes his side to struggling Corinthian on Saturday with a chance to maintain their unbeaten start to the season.

Picture: TONY GRAY

## FOOTBALL



ON TARGET: Lewis Rivett scored with a great header

### Rivett's header nets Norton an away win

Holmesdale 0 Norton Sports 1

A LEWIS Rivett header deep into the second half helped Norton earn their first win on their travels this season.

With a strong wind blowing across the pitch, both teams seemed a little unsure at the start but Holmesdale were having the better of the possession.

A superb stop from Chris Smith denied the home side after five minutes, before the game was interrupted after a Holmesdale player suffered a bad injury resulting in him being taken away in an ambulance.

Once the game got underway, Norton lost both Jon Emmerson and Jack Goodger to injury and the changes did little to help the flow of the game as both teams struggled to adopt to the new formations.

#### Penalty shout

With ten minutes of the half remaining Smith made another great block and almost immediately Norton were denied a penalty shout for hand ball after a corner.

The second half saw the home side continue having the lion's share of possession, forcing Norton to have to defend in numbers and making it difficult to take any control over the game.

The visitors held strong with Daniel Baverstock in particular impressing as they restricted Holmesdale, ensuring Smith's only job was plucking out crosses. Norton's best opportunities always seemed to be set pieces and as the half progressed they looked more and more threatening from these. On the hour Scott Appleton's knock down saw Ashley Baverstock miss-hit an opportunity from the edge of the box and then with 20 minutes to go, player boss Ben Taylor was blatantly pushed in the box at a corner but the referee chose to ignore the visitor's claims.

Time seemed to be running out until on 78 minutes Ryan Rook hit a corner to the near post where Rivett hit a bullet header into the back of the net. Norton had little trouble in running the clock down in a game where the points meant more than the performance.

### Faversham Town starting XI



Subs used: Richardson (Larkin 15), Sinden (Smissen 48)

Some have questioned the side he will put out against a team second bottom in the Kent League, to which he answered: "I can tell you I will be putting out the best side I have got. No one has the right to win games in this league. There are no easy games and Corinthian will be another tough one."

## LEAGUE TABLES

### RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Godalming Town	8	6	1	1	+9	19
2 Merstham	10	6	1	3	+3	19
3 Folkestone Invicta	8	5	2	1	+6	17
4 Croydon Athletic	7	4	2	1	+15	14
5 Chatham Town	8	4	1	3	-1	13
6 Corinthian-Casuals	8	3	3	2	+4	12
7 Walton & Hersham	7	3	3	1	+4	12
8 Worthing	7	4	0	3	+2	12
9 Fleet Town	8	3	2	3	+5	11
10 Dulwich Hamlet	8	3	2	3	+1	11
11 Metropolitan Police	8	2	4	2	+2	10
12 Burgess Hill Town	8	3	1	4	-1	10
13 Walton Casuals	7	2	3	2	0	9
14 Whyteleafe	8	3	0	5	-1	9
15 Ramsgate	9	2	3	4	-2	9
16 Leatherhead	7	2	2	3	0	8
<b>17 Sittingbourne</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
18 Eastbourne Town	7	1	3	3	-4	6
19 Horsham YMCA	7	1	3	3	-7	6
20 Whitstable Town	6	2	0	4	-9	6
21 Ashford Town	8	1	2	5	-17	5
22 Chipstead	8	0	4	4	-9	4

### KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Faversham Town	8	7	1	0	+1	22
2 Beckenham Town	7	5	1	1	+8	16
3 Herne Bay	7	5	0	2	+4	15
4 Greenwich Borough	8	3	3	2	+5	12
5 Erith & Belvedere	6	4	0	2	+3	12
6 Sevenoaks	6	2	3	1	+7	9
7 Erith Town	5	2	2	1	+2	8
8 Hythe Town	4	2	1	1	+8	7
9 Holmesdale	7	2	1	4	+1	7
<b>10 Norton Sports</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>7</b>
11 Deal Town	6	2	1	3	-6	7
12 Fisher	8	2	1	5	-8	7
13 Tunbridge Wells	6	1	3	2	0	6
14 Sporting Bengal	6	2	0	4	-12	6
15 Corinthian	5	0	2	3	-10	2
16 Lordswood	7	0	2	5	-13	2

**FIXTURES (Saturday):** Ryman Division One South: Horsham YMCA v Sittingbourne; Kent League: Corinthian v Faversham Town; Norton Sports v Greenwich Borough

## Prolific Glass shatters Wimbledon's hopes

## HOCKEY

### Winchester 3 Gore Court 3

A YOUTHFUL looking Gore Court opened their season with a spirited performance at Winchester.

The Sittingbourne side were without four first-team regulars and were forced to call on several young players who didn't disappoint on the day.

Both teams play open, attractive hockey and as such both defences were under pressure.

Court settled into the game well and created a number of half chances, however it was the home side who went ahead after 20 minutes through Will Brown when a break from the half way line caught the Court defence outnumbered.

The visitors responded well to going a goal down, but were unable to create a clear chance before half-time.

Ten minutes into the second half, Winchester took a two-goal lead after a short corner was converted by Adrian Wilkinson. Court responded almost immediately when the prolific Aaron Glass pulled a goal back from a corner. The visitors were on the front foot, but minutes later a slack piece of marking let Wilkinson in to make it 3-1 with only ten minutes to go.

Court surged forward and after good play from Sam Miller, Glass slammed in a reverse hit. Sensing a chance to pull level, Court were all over a tiring Winchester side and again Glass was in the right place to deflect for a point.



SPIRITED PERFORMANCE: Gore Court played attractive hockey against Winchester at the weekend

in a Paul Surridge pass to draw the sides level.

Court pushed forward for the winner, but with three minutes to go the game was abandoned following a nasty head injury to a Winchester defender and they had to settle for a point.

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# December 5, 2009 - January 17, 2010

# Our most spectacular pantomime ever? You'd better believe it!



PANTO LEGEND:  
Marlowe favourite Dave Lee will be playing Tinkerbell

## New venue's a top-flight arena

WITH the closure of the Marlowe for redevelopment, this year's pantomime is being staged in a state-of-the-art big top theatre tent.

It will be called the Marlowe Theatre Arena – but what, exactly, is it?

Rob Haworth is project manager for Theatre Tent, the company behind the venue, which will be at the former Kingsmead coach park.

He is keen to dispel myths about cold, circus-style structures in garish colours.

He said: "While the structure has its roots in tradition, what we use now are more correctly called 'tensile structures' and while the structure is temporary, the Marlowe Theatre Arena will be perfectly heated, have comfortable seats and more toilets than the old theatre."

The arena will provide nearly 30,000 sq ft of space, which will be used to house the audience areas, bar and refreshment stands and, of course, the entire pantomime production.



**BIG STAGE:** The arena is nearly 30,000 sq ft

It will be dark blue in colour, 198ft-long, 148ft-wide and 56ft-high.

"Audience-goers should be under no illusion," Rob said. "This isn't a watered-down version of the Canterbury panto just because it's in a tent – far from it, the sets still move, Peter will still fly and producers Paul and Emily are using every item in their panto toolbox to make this

the most memorable Marlowe panto ever."

Although the producers and Theatre Tent have been working on the project for more than a year, remarkably, the arena will only take a couple of days to build. Starting with an empty coach park, the main support beams are raised on motors, then the roof is lifted and the walls added. Next, the technical teams will add all of the lighting and sound equipment as well as the specialist equipment that allows Peter to fly.

Theatre Tent technical production manager Andy Barlett said: "Once that's done, we add the seating, put the flooring down and lay the carpet. With more than 1200 seats and 12,000 sq ft of carpet, we'll have our work cut out!"

For more details about the Marlowe Theatre Arena and the pantomime in general, visit [www.marlowepeterpan.co.uk](http://www.marlowepeterpan.co.uk).

To book tickets visit [www.newmarlowetheatre.org.uk](http://www.newmarlowetheatre.org.uk) or call the box office on 01227 787787.

## Sunshine smile keeps family tradition



**FAMILY:** Paul, Freddie, Emily and Poppy

AT the age of just four weeks, Poppy Sunshine Hendy already had a production under her nappy.

The talented tot was filmed as baby Cinderella and the footage will be used in this year's Guildford pantomime.

It won't come as a surprise though when you consider her heritage: mum Emily and dad Paul are panto producers!

Better known as Evolution Productions, Emily and Paul are the force behind the Marlowe's panto (they met at the Marlowe during *Beauty and the Beast* in 1997) and four more across the country.

Emily was born and brought up in Deal. She went into film production and worked across the world before returning to Kent to work for the family business.

In 2004, she began producing with Paul, who is something of a panto veteran. He has appeared in more than 20 pantos, directed about as many and written more than 30 scripts.

He is also an established writer and has two novels to his name.

Paul is once again writing, directing and pro-

ducing all five Evolution productions, including, of course, Peter Pan.

Emily, Paul, Poppy (now nine weeks) and four-year-old Freddie live in Eastridge. Freddie is no stranger to the stage, either – like Poppy, he was filmed at the age of four weeks, as baby Cinderella.

Paul admitted that having a young family and a huge workload is pretty exhausting for him and Emily.

He said: "This is always a particularly busy time for us and this year we also have to think about the Marlowe Theatre Arena. We aren't getting a lot of sleep at the moment but keep going because we are so excited by the prospects ahead and we really want to make it happen. Canterbury, in particular, is such a big show and will be so spectacular, so we know it will be worth it."

Amazingly, the family connection doesn't stop there: Emily's mum Helga Wood is the set designer and costume supervisor for the pantos, sister Dorcas Wood will be the company manager at Canterbury, and brother George Wood is the man behind the Festive Film season, also at the Marlowe Theatre Arena.

## Your chance to 'Hook' up with the cast

COMEDIAN Ade Edmondson (Captain Hook) is joined in Peter Pan by Kent comic Dave Lee who, for his fourteenth Marlowe panto, will play Tinkerbell.

Also making a welcome return to Canterbury will be Ben Roddy, who was such a hit as Herman the Henchman in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

Steven Butler will play Peter Pan, while Gemma Sutton has been cast as Wendy. Both have West End, regional theatre and TV credits to their name.

And, if you fancy an ice cream with Ade or a drink with Dave, then read on!

One lucky KOS reader and three guests can win tickets to see Peter Pan and meet the cast at an exclusive after-show party.

The performance – at 7.30pm on Wednesday, December 9 – is when press and dignitaries get to see the pantomime.

And when the curtain goes down, everyone enjoys a drink and chat with the stars, who are more than happy to sign autographs and pose for pictures.

To enter, simply answer the question below and send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Peter Pan Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. The closing date is October 30, 2009.

**QUESTION:** Who is playing Captain Hook in this year's pantomime at the Marlowe theatre?

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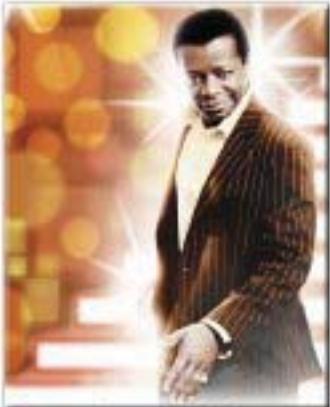
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# Experience the Marlowe Theatre Arena first with these sensational shows.



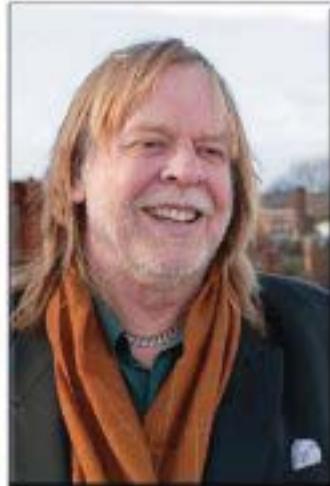
**Jane McDonald**  
The star of 'Loose Women'  
live in concert  
Tuesday 24 November  
7.30pm



**Stephen K Amos**  
Award-winning comic  
as seen on  
'Mock The Week' and  
'Have I Got News For You'  
Thursday 26 November  
7.30pm



**ABBA Gold &  
Bee Gees UK**  
Friday 27 November  
7.30pm



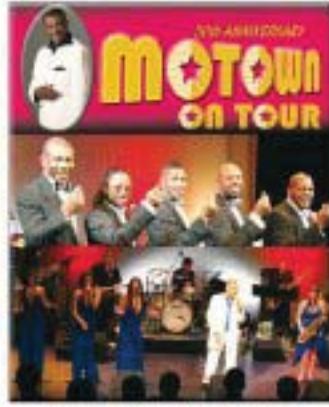
**An Evening with  
Rick Wakeman**  
and Guests  
Saturday 28 November  
7.30pm



**Hayley Westenra**  
In Concert  
Sunday 29 November  
7.30pm



**Grumpy Old  
Women  
Chin Up Britain**  
Starring  
Jenny Eclair,  
Wendi Peters  
and  
Susie Blake  
Monday 7 December  
7.30pm



**Roy G Hemming's  
Motown On Tour**  
Featuring Live on Stage  
The classic hits of Four Tops,  
Temptations, Supremes & more  
Monday 14 December  
7.30pm



**Elvis At Christmas**  
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World Champion  
Elvis Tribute Artist,  
Lee 'Memphis' King  
Friday 18 December  
7.30pm



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Marlowe  
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Marlowe in motion